

THE Nonconformist.

"THE DISSIDENCE OF DISSENT AND THE PROTESTANTISM OF THE PROTESTANT RELIGION."

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ECCLESIASTICAL AFFAIRS.

NONCONFORMIST PORTRAIT GALLERY.

No. VII.—GEORGE WHITEFIELD.

THERE are two tendencies in the present day which promise to secure a better understanding and wider appreciation of such men as George Whitefield than have hitherto obtained. They have been pretty well understood and appreciated by certain classes always, and we do not imagine that any other classes will do them *exact* and *thorough* justice. Men morally great must, like the sun, be seen in their own light. A perfect perception of their worth can come only of fellowship with their spirit. But they may be, for some reasons, loved and honoured by those who, in important particulars, are strangers to their spiritual principles, and do not sympathise with the form and kind of their prevailing aims. The tendencies we refer to—the one to regard what men *are*, the intensity of their belief, and their devotedness to the working of it *out*—and the other, to esteem most what has most *power*—can scarcely fail, we take it, to win for the “heroes” of the church a higher esteem and admiration than it has been the wont of those out of the church to cherish for them. Indeed, we would sooner trust those heroes, even now, with some philosophers of the world than with many classes ecclesiastical.

None can doubt, on taking the merest glance at Whitefield’s life, that he was a man of a single eye and a full purpose. What he did he did with all his heart. His labours were the mere projection of his soul on his outer lot—the oozings forth of his faith and his fervour into his external sphere. Certain great and simple convictions possessed him thoroughly. Working for God and men was not one of several things, but the “one thing” he did. To him it was so vast and so glorious that he needed no other. It was his meat to do it. He lived in it, and on it. It was not an expenditure of strength, but a means of it. While blessing, he was blessed. Laborious service for souls was not a painful toil requiring compensation in order to reconcile him to it. He deemed not religious effort to be as physic, for which there needs must be a sugar-plum. He had great reward in keeping the commandments he had received of God. No other solution can explain his course. So entire a consecration as his to the welfare of his race could not be made but by a heart that lived only as men were saved. For his was not a common story. He might have run a far different career. Had he been indifferent enough to be “prudent,” had the good of others been so faint an object to his mind as to have allowed a supreme regard to his own advancement and profit, he might have walked in the sure and straight path of clerical respectability and preferment. But he chose another. “The bed was shorter than that he could lay himself on it, the covering narrower than that he could wrap himself in it.” Ecclesiastical proprieties afforded not room for the dimensions of his soul. It was not love of novelty, eccentricity, vanity—none of these can interpret his self-denial, his exertions, or his success. That he should select the object which he ever sought—that he should follow it with so incessant and restless an anxiety—that he should cram into so short a life such multitudinous engagements, preaching 18,000 sermons, and dying while in his prime—that he should bear, and glory in, such a copious variety of insults, slanders, mockeries, and persecutions—preserving his soul unruffled when assailed with discordant noises, pelted with hard stones, covered with rotten eggs, and cursed with yet more rotten hearts—all this demanded a simplicity and an energy of spiritual principle which have seldom been found in riper perfection in the sons of men.

And what was it for? Solely to do men good. Whatever may be men’s opinions about the doctrines that he proclaimed, it is obvious, only admitting that men have souls, that there are within them elements of moral consciousness and character, that the outer

things of flesh do encompass and invest deep mysteries of spiritual being, experience, and destiny—only admitting this, *Whitefield was right*. And he went the right way to gain his end; for he did gain it. Multitudes bore witness to the efficacy of his ministry. And they were not dubious testimonies. His converts were not nicely chosen for the purpose. They were not men of whom it was difficult to say whether they were benefited or injured by his labours. They were not men of a common character for evil. He went among classes that had been well-nigh despaired of. He entered into the very heart of the kingdom of darkness and depravity. Thousands were transformed by single addresses—whole districts bore the marks of his divine success. To question whether this man was of God is simply to deny that God is. When the poor healed Jew was sharply questioned about him who healed him, and curiously told that he must be a bad one, his answer was, “Whether he be a sinner I know not; one thing I know, that, whereas I was once blind, now I see.” That is enough. A meet reply to all such pettifogging critics! The idea of pestering a man with quibbles who has been healed! of applying church rules of judgment to one who works a miracle! So we say to all who would deny Whitefield’s mission—“His work is his witness; what he did prove whence he came; if his spiritual fruitfulness be not an evidence that he was a messenger of the Most High, what can prove it? If such fruitfulness can consist with his not being one, it is a small matter whether he were one or not.”

We cannot separate Whitefield’s power as a preacher from the entire absorption of his soul in his mission. Granting cheerfully that the truth he uttered was the fitting and forcible instrument of his remarkable successes, we yet ask, How is it that such an instrument does not always produce like results? The only answer we know of is, That it is not always employed by like men. Nor was it his voice, rich and various as were its tones; nor was it his genius, never at fault when the passions of his audience required skilful treatment. That voice might have charmed away in vain, and that genius might have displayed all its resources in vain, had he not possessed the key of human hearts—a *deep spiritual sympathy*. There are men who can utter the most solemn things, with no other effect than the production of a smile; and who can so speak of admitted truths as to beget, for the time, the suspicion of their erroneousness. When a clergyman once asked a celebrated actor (if we remember rightly, Garrick) how it came to pass that players were so much more effective than preachers, the answer, for substance was, “You preach realities as if they were fictions, and we act fictions as if they were realities.” That answer expressed a vast deal of true philosophy. Souls have tremendous power over souls. Whatever may be thought of Mesmerism, there is something akin to it in spiritual influence. The earnest, anxious utterer of common-places, will do vastly more than the cold and careless proclaimers of marvels, not to say that the efficacy of truths depends more on their nature than their novelty. Whitefield spoke truths—few, plain truths—not only as if they were truths, but because they were truths. His seriousness and warmth were not assumed; he did not put them on for the nonce, nor work them up by an effort of the will. His understanding perceived the objects he described; his conscience was at one with the obligations he enforced; his affections were filled and fired with the spiritual influences that he sought to communicate. His soul could distinctly realise other souls, could look them in the face, search them through and through, and, by the help of God, he had power with them and prevailed.

And yet there are some who think it a wise thing to ask of him—Could he do now what he did a hundred years ago? Were he to live again, would there not be a great difference in the results of his ministry? The vice of the day is to exaggerate the importance of different times in estimating the characters and successes of different men. Good and bad are alike unjustly dealt with in this way. If a man were very vicious a long time ago, some shallow philosopher exclaims—“Oh, you must set it down to the age in which he lived.” If a man did wonders a long time ago, another superficial critic inquires—“Could he do them in the present state of society?” As to Whitefield, we care not to answer this question. Wonders he did when nearly all besides had neither the will nor the power to do them. What he might do now would be a great matter were he living now. Seeing he is not, it is no matter at all. But we assign but little of his astonishing power to his age. To do so shows rather a disposition to evade what is unpleasant

than to discover what is true. Out-of-door preaching may be more common than it was in his day, and the preaching of the gospel more common still; but what is wanted to secure his success is to have his spirit. The requirement is not of a new thing, but of an old thing. Let there be his vivid convictions, his passion for men’s salvation, his thirst to do good, his self-denying and eager exertions, and out of doors or in doors, with his “spirit and power,” there will be something like his peaceful, Pentecostal triumphs.

THE BOW DRAWN AT A VENTURE.

A VALUED friend has put into our hands a small pamphlet, published by Ward and Co., consisting of *A Letter to the Pope*, written by Dr. Horace Bushnell, an American divine, now on a visit, we believe, to this country. This gentleman addresses “His Holiness,” as a member of the Christian Alliance of the United States, of which Association the following brief notice is given in the “Advertisement” to the letter:—

“The Christian Alliance is a Society, organised three years ago, in the United States, the object and aim of which are declared in its second article to be—to promote religious freedom, and to diffuse religious knowledge, in Italy and other Papal countries.” The plan of this Society, it will be seen, is radically different from that of another, recently started in England, under a similar name. One proposes combined action for a specific object, expecting union to result as a necessary incident; the other, union as an object in itself, to be obtained by conference and devotional intercourse. Whether two plans so distinct as these can be made to coalesce in some third plan, combining the excellencies, and obviating the defects of both, remains to be seen. The American plan has certainly the more masculine character of the two; and I may hereafter undertake to show, that it is capable of being so modified as to obviate all the objections encountered by the other.”

The idea of writing to the Pope strikes us as an eminently happy one; for, though the venerable Pontiff himself may never glance an eye over this appeal to him, many of his ecclesiastical subjects will. The mode in which the idea is carried out commends itself to our judgment as wise, dignified, and successful. The writer avoids those theological topics which are chiefly in debate between Protestants and Roman Catholics, and grapples with the Pope’s conscience in matters which must be decided rather by honesty of heart than by profound learning or acute reasoning. He describes, as an eye-witness, the miserable system of civil government maintained in the Papal dominions—the endless exactions and cruel oppressions practised upon his subjects—and their consequent degeneracy of character. He charges upon him the maintenance of religion by the encouragement of ignorance, and by connivance at superstitions the hollowness of which he must have himself observed. He graphically describes several ecclesiastical pageants he had seen at Rome, and contrasts them with pure Christianity. He then proposes to his Holiness simply to submit his church to the open trial of truth in the field of religious liberty, and concludes in these words:—

“One suggestion, and I leave you. I saw in the cathedral at Lyons, as I passed through that city, a proclamation of the archbishop calling the faithful to pray for the conversion of England, and I have since heard of a like summons proclaimed at Rome, and in other places, even as far distant as Constantinople. This, I said, is well; it is at least a step in advance of the fulminations that went smoking through the kingdoms on a former day against this recusant empire. I only suggest, whether it would not have been a little more modest, if you had summoned your followers, instead, to pray not for the conversion of England to your opinion, but that you and all Christians may be guided into the truth, wherever it is, and there embrace each other in a durable fraternity? Issue now this for your proclamation. Call upon the world to join you, and I will answer for it that all the recusant millions, who roused themselves against you in the days of Luther, will joyfully meet the summons, and a spectacle shall be offered, at which the world, and possibly, other worlds may gaze—all the divided, clashing hosts of Christendom bowed together before God, asking for the truth that shall end their disagreements, and make them one for ever.”

We own, we like the originality, the boldness, and the candour of this novel mode of controversy for great principles. We rejoice that the first attempt in this direction has been undertaken by one able to do justice to it—and we should be glad to see a letter to our own Queen, written in the same courteous, but pithy and practical style, on the position she occupies in relation to the Church of England.

ANTI-STATE-CHURCH ASSOCIATION.—On Thursday evening, a lecture on the principles, objects, and claims of the British Anti-State-Church Association, was delivered by John Kingsley, Esq., at Headgate chapel, Colchester. The meeting was respectably attended,

and at the close of the address a vote of thanks was passed to the lecturer, accompanied by an expression of sympathy in the views of the association.—In the agricultural village of Totternhoe, in Essex, Mr. Kingsley delivered a lecture on the objects and principles of the Anti-State-Church Association on the 21st inst. The meeting was held in a commodious barn which had been fitted up as a place of worship. The audience, which consisted of about 300 persons (including four Dissenting ministers from neighbouring localities), paid the most marked attention to the lecturer's eloquent exposition of the manifold evils resulting from church and state alliances, and to his earnest appeals to all professed Nonconformists not to shrink from a manly avowal of those important principles which were intrusted to them for a far different purpose than to keep buried in a napkin. At the last church-rate struggle in this village, the rate-loving party were in the minority.—Mr. Kingsley delivered a powerful lecture at Plaistow, Essex, on Monday night, to a thoughtful and deeply-interested audience. His fair, practical, and earnest style of treating the subject, bringing it clearly home to the "business and bosom" of every one, as well as his excellent ability in explanation and reply, produced a strong impression. The lecture and the lecturer formed a good type of the bold but sober spirit of the Association itself. Messrs. E. Halliday and J. Curwen, ministers; T. Roberts, Esq., and other gentlemen, were present.

DORCHESTER.—GATHERCOLE v. MIAILL.—As many friends in Dorchester have felt the verdict and costs in the above prosecution to be exceedingly severe on Mr. Miaill, the respected editor of the *Nonconformist* newspaper, and wishing to express their sympathy by contributing to lessen the heavy amount of pecuniary loss he must necessarily sustain, they have united in a subscription for that purpose, and trust that, in every place where Liberalism and Nonconformity are found, their advocates will come forward heart and hand, that freedom of inquiry and freedom of expression may be known throughout the whole world to be the characteristics of this our professedly free country.—*Hants Independent*.

PROPOSED PLAN FOR ENDOWING FREE CHURCH SCHOOLMASTERS.—A circular has been addressed to the office-bearers of the Free Church by Mr. Robert Stewart, of Dundee, in which it is proposed to endow the Free Church schoolmasters by means of Life Assurances.

THE "REV." M. A. GATHERCOLE.—This individual pretends to be so very conscientious a character, that he cannot belong to any institution where all the subscribers are not members of the Established sect; and yet, strange to say, we find his name amongst the subscribers to the Royal Asylum of St. Ann's! Is Mr. Gathercole ignorant of the fact, that amongst the subscribers to that most excellent and well-managed institution may be found Independents, Unitarians, Swedenborgians, Jews,—nay, even one Mohamedan? The "heretical" opinions of many of the subscribers can be no secret to Mr. G.; and yet he has not, that we are aware of, dared to withdraw his name, and allow his "conscience" to cut as conspicuous a figure at Brixton as it has done at Chatteris and other places. How is this? Is Mr. G.'s bravery only great amongst village crones and petty shopkeepers of a country town, while it "oozes out at his fingers' ends" when his reverence is in the presence of the clergy and dignitaries of his own community? We ask the question, and shall be extremely obliged by Mr. G. favouring us with an answer.—*Inquirer*.

The Rev. Mr. Sibthorpe is now at Oxford on a visit to some of his old college friends. It is said that he has imposed on himself a silence of three years from his usual pulpit ministrations, as a mark of penitential regret for having, in a moment of ill-judged excitement, joined the Romish communion.—*Daily Paper*.

THE WESLEYAN CONFERENCE OF MINISTERS is to be held this year at Bristol. Nearly five hundred ministers will be present from every part of the country; and preparations are already commenced for their reception.

THE TITHE WARFARE IN MANSFIELD.—We understand that the cow seized for tithes, which belonged to Mr. Addlington, of King's Mill, was offered for sale, in the market-place of Mansfield, on Thursday week, but so high runs the tide of popular feeling in that town against exactions of this kind, that no purchaser could be found, and the animal, of course, was obliged to be taken into the vicar's parental keeping a little longer.—*Notts Review*.

THE EVANGELICAL ALLIANCE.—On Tuesday evening an aggregate meeting of the Protestants of Dublin, of every denomination, took place in the Round Room of the Rotunda, for the purpose of forming the proposed Evangelical Alliance of Christians. About 3,000 persons were present, including the Hon. Justice Crampston; Dr. Edgar, Belfast; Dr. Drew, Belfast; Dr. Blackwood, Dublin; Mr. Todd Brown, Liverpool; Dr. Cox, London; Dr. Urwick, Dublin; Dr. Fletcher, Dr. Walsh, James Gibson, Esq., P. D. Hardy, Esq., and various other ministers and gentlemen. Judge Crampston occupied the chair. On Wednesday evening an adjourned meeting was held, when Dr. Cox and Mr. Kyle (the clergyman recently suspended by the Archbishop of Dublin,) addressed the meeting.

KETTERING CHURCH-RATES.—The churchwardens and constables of Kettering have lately been very busy in showing their zeal on behalf of Mother Church. Goods to the value of £24 4s. 8d. have been seized from Mr. Waddington, and eleven other recusants, for rates amounting to £2 11s. 10d. About twenty more summonses have been served, and many more refuse to pay. The articles seized include bibles, prayer-books, tea-kettles, gridirons, shoes, starch, a dutch-oven, wax-candles, and a sack of flour! What a rich booty for the "poor man's church" to boast of!

CANTON DE VAUD.—The Continental committee of the Free church have received a very interesting address from the Free Presbytery of Calcutta to the suffering witnesses of the Canton de Vaud, along with a sum of £120, collected at a sermon preached at their request by M. Lacroix, himself a Swiss, as well as missionary to

the East. The sum is to be devoted to the relief of the sufferers.—*Witness*.

THE PROCEEDINGS AGAINST RONGE.—The King of Prussia has just issued orders to the President of the province of Silesia to cease all proceedings commenced against M. Ronge by the criminal courts at Breslau, owing to articles contrary to the Roman Catholic doctrines in some of his pamphlets in favour of the German Catholics, of whom he is the founder. This toleration has had a most salutary effect on the public mind.

RELIGIOUS INTELLIGENCE.

CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH, CAMDEN-ROAD, HOLLOWAY.—This church was opened for divine worship on Thursday the 23rd instant, when Dr. Raffles, of Liverpool, preached in the morning, and Dr. Harris, of Cheshunt College, in the evening. In the afternoon, about 150 persons, among whom we perceived Drs. Raffles and W. Smith, and Messrs. Blackburn, Binney, Godwin, Allen, Hollis, and Miall, dined together in a tent which had been most elegantly fitted up for the occasion, by the ladies; and the dinner, provided by the proprietors of the London Tavern, was "all that could be desired." On Sunday the 26th instant sermons were preached by Mr. A. J. Morris, the minister of the place, and Mr. Caleb Morris, of Fetter-lane chapel. The amount collected after the different services was nearly £500. Holloway congregational church is built in the decorated Gothic style, which has been carried out more completely than in any dissenting church with which the writer is acquainted; and, so far as we know, it is the only Independent church in which any attempt has been made to carry it out. Great praise is due to J. T. Emmett, Esq., the architect, and Mr. Carter, the builder of this elegant structure. The entire cost of the building, it is expected, will be about £4,000; and when it is considered that this includes not only the builder's contract, but heating, lighting, furnishing, raising and laying out of grounds, &c., &c., one common objection to the employment of the Gothic style, by Dissenters, appears less solid than it is generally supposed to be. Another objection was removed from many minds by the opening services; that which is founded on the alleged unadaptedness of this style to purposes of teaching. Preachers and hearers were alike pleased with the building. We cannot but hope that this will be, if not a beginning, a stimulus to architectural taste and zeal among Dissenters, who have given too much occasion for the suspicion that they have little sympathy with the higher forms of use and beauty—that they are ruled by gross ideas of gross utility—that "gain is godliness."

OPENING OF THE RICHMOND INDEPENDENT CHAPEL, MANCHESTER.—The Richmond Independent Chapel, a handsome and commodious place of worship, which has just been reared in Broughton-road, Salford, was opened on Wednesday last. The services commenced at eleven o'clock in the morning. The opening sermon was preached by the Rev. Dr. Raffles, of Liverpool, who selected for his text the words "Verily I say unto you, on this rock will I build;" and who delivered a powerful and eloquent discourse. At two o'clock in the afternoon the principal members of the congregation, together with a number of ministers and friends, dined together in the school-room underneath the chapel. About 100 gentleman sat down to table, amongst whom were Mr. Alderman Neild, who presided; the Rev. Dr. Raffles; the Rev. D. E. Ford, minister of the congregation, and author of "Laodicea," "Damascus," "Decapolis," &c.; the Rev. Dr. Massie; the Rev. Dr. Clunie; the Rev. Dr. Nolan; the Rev. Mr. Gwyther; the Rev. J. L. Poore; Mr. Samuel Fletcher; Mr. Alderman Bancroft; Mr. J. Hewitt; Mr. W. Morris; Mr. Lane, the architect of the chapel; Mr. Abraham Buckley; Mr. Agnew; Mr. George Wood; Mr. Carrington, of Stockport; Mr. Carlton; together with ministers from Patricroft, Bury, Stockport, &c. After the withdrawal of the cloth, the Chairman made a few observations suitable to the interesting occasion, and then proposed the health of Dr. Raffles.—Dr. Raffles, in responding, said he understood that it was the intention of the gentlemen present to pay off the debt of the chapel, either before they left the room, or shortly after. He hoped that this would be done. Some noble examples had already been set. Mr. Alderman Bancroft, who had given £200 towards the erection of the chapel, had intimated that he would give £100 more; Mr. Lowe, who had given £150, would give another £100; Mr. Ainsworth was to double his original subscription of £100; Mr. Thompson, who had given £150, would give £50 more; Mr. Draycott had added £20 to his original subscription of £50; Mr. Holehouse had given £20, and now he would give £10 more. Mr. Gascoyne, who had previously given nothing, had put down £20, and the chairman (Mr. Alderman Neild) had subscribed £50 [cheers].—The Chairman next gave the health of Mr. Samuel Fletcher.—Mr. Fletcher, in reply, said that he had a mortal hatred of all debts, and he was therefore glad to hear that the congregation had come to the determination of sweeping off the debt attached to the chapel. That was the only way to go on comfortably. The healths of Mr. A. Buckley, Mr. G. Wood, Morris, Mr. Carrington, Mr. Hewitt, Mr. Lane, the building committee, and other gentlemen, were afterwards drunk, and many contributions were made to the fund for liquidating the debt. Mr. Wood gave £25, Mr. Morris £25, Mr. Buckley £10, Mr. Woodward £5, Mr. Hewitt £5, and Mr. Carlton added £50 to his two previous contributions of £100 each. The whole amount collected at the sermon and the dinner was £714. In the evening there was another service, when about £45 was collected. The cost of the building, exclusive of the price of the land, was £4,000: and, as the unsubscribed amount prior to the opening services was £1,500, there now only remains a debt of between £700 and £800. It is expected that this will be raised in a very short time. The collections of to-morrow will no doubt yield a handsome sum.—*Manchester Examiner*.

GOMERSAL.—On Wednesday, April 15, Mr. Archibald McMillan was ordained pastor of the church assembling in Grove chapel, Gomersal. Amongst those who took

part in the services were the following ministers:—Dr. Hamilton, and Messrs. Scales, Ely, and Hadswell, of Leeds, and Mr. Stowell, of Rotherham-college.

DISSOLUTION OF THE CHRISTIAN CHARTIST CHURCH.—A meeting of the above body was called in their place of meeting in Livery-street chapel, on Thursday evening, by their pastor, Mr. O'Neill, to decide whether they would dissolve themselves as a Christian Chartist church, and join the Baptist denomination, or not. Mr. O'Neill, after stating that he had changed his opinions in reference to the constitution of their church, which he had himself formed, said he thought the worldly term "Chartist" should not be an appendage to the heavenly term "Christian"; and, moreover, as he had become convinced of the divine institution of immersion, he felt himself bound to act on the convictions of his own conscience, so that he could not permit, in a church where he was minister, infant sprinkling; and, therefore, he moved that the Christian Chartist church dissolve itself and join the Baptist denomination. He observed that he had no just reason to ask them to do so, it was a matter of choice whether they conformed to his resolution or not; but if they did not, he should resign his connexion with them. On the motion being seconded and put, it was declared carried unanimously, with the exception of one vote. Thus has ended the existence of a body which was formed about six years since by Mr. O'Neill himself.—*Birmingham Pilot*.

PROPOSAL TO RAISE ONE HUNDRED THOUSAND SHILLINGS FOR THE BAPTIST MISSION.—By the *Missionary Herald* of April, it appears, that an attempt is about to be made to free the Baptist Missionary Society from its pecuniary embarrassments, the Rev. Dr. Cox having, at the unanimous request of the committee, undertaken the arduous task of collecting the requisite sum. The proposal is, to pay down one shilling only, and is addressed to every member of the Baptist denomination. If 100,000 persons present each a shilling, the whole object will be accomplished. We understand that the subscription is proceeding with every probability of complete success.—*Patriot*.

DR. PERRY, late of Reading, having accepted the pastorate of the Particular Baptist church, Agard-street, Derby, has commenced the important duties of his office with pleasing prospects of usefulness.

BRUNSWICK CHAPEL, MILE END-ROAD.—Mr. George Evans having resigned the pastoral oversight of the church assembling in this chapel, a cordial and unanimous invitation has been given to Mr. J. B. Talbot, of Hephzibah chapel, Darling-place, Cambridge-road, who has accepted the vacant pastorate. The chapel will be closed for a few days for repairs, after which the church, under the pastoral care of Mr. Talbot, will be united to that assembling in Brunswick chapel.

CORRESPONDENCE.

CONGREGATIONAL SCHOOL, LEWISHAM.

To the Editor of the *Nonconformist*.

SIR,—Those readers of the *Nonconformist* who belong to the Congregational denomination can scarcely need to be informed of the existence and claims of this school for the education of the sons of the poorer ministers of that body. It is now so much in debt as to have induced the committee to announce to their subscribers that, unless there be a considerable increase in the receipts during the next half year, they are apprehensive that it will be indispensably necessary for them to omit the next October election.

A kind friend of the institution has, therefore, made the following generous proposal:

"I think you want £500 to keep you going, and to enable you to increase the candidates. I should have no objection to be one of twenty to give £25, or one of twenty-five to give £20, which would make £500; and I cannot help thinking there are many who feel for poor ministers who would gladly contribute towards it. I wish particularly that my name should not be mentioned publicly as making this offer, and I make it conditionally that the £500 be raised."

Sincerely hoping that this friendly challenge will be cordially accepted by some of your readers, and assured of your readiness to receive their contributions on our behalf,

I am, sir, yours faithfully,

GEORGE ROSE, Secretary.

Paradise-row, Rotherhithe, April 22.

THE WILDERSPIN TESTIMONIAL.—A subscription has been commenced—originating, we believe, in Yorkshire—with a view of offering a "national tribute" to Mr. Wilderspin, the amiable and indefatigable founder and promoter of Infant-schools. Most sincerely do we regret to say, that the circumstances of the good old man render this act of justice an act also of necessity. Mr. James Simpson in Edinburgh, Mr. J. Terrington in Hull, and Mr. E. P. Lampert in Manchester, act as secretaries *pro tempore* to the fund. If ever there was an unselfish enthusiast, it was Wilderspin. Collective childhood was to him what country is to the patriot. He lived for children. His pleasure was to elicit their faculties, to inform their minds, to contribute to their happiness, to arm them with principles adapted to their capacity. His time was at the command of all who required it in this cause. The employment of his life was to found and organise infant-schools, asking little for his trouble, and paying agents to assist him. The subscription-list is on our table. Beside it lies the subscription-lists to the Hudson testimonial—we blush at the contrast. That no one may have the apology of being able to say he did not know where to send his money, we add, that subscriptions are received at the banks of Denison, Heywood, and Co., London; Leatham, Tew, and Co., Wakefield; A. Heywood and Sons, Liverpool; Sir B. Heywood and Co., Manchester.—*Abridged from the Spectator*.

MR. SHEIL, M.P., has arrived in town from Madeira, where he has been staying for some months.

MR. JOHN ASHTON, OF HYDE, younger brother of the late Mr. Thomas Ashton, and a man of large property and somewhat eccentric character, who died on Saturday week, has left a considerable amount of property, estimated at about £150,000, towards the reduction of the national debt.

CHARITABLE TRUSTS BILL.

THE DISSENTERS' COERCION BILL.—The Dissenters of this town and neighbourhood, as well as others throughout the country, are at length bestirring themselves against the Charitable Trusts Bill now before the House of Lords. A public meeting is summoned to take place in the Music-hall, on Thursday evening next, when energetic steps will be taken, we trust, to give the most determined opposition to this mischievous measure. The various Dissenting congregations in the town are forwarding petitions, and taking other means to thwart its progress. Clavering-place congregation, with its usual spirit in such matters, has taken the lead in the movement, having agreed to a petition on Monday evening last, and transmitted it to Earl Grey for presentation. For the benefit of other congregations in the neighbourhood, we have inserted this petition in another part of to-day's paper. A petition has also, we are happy to learn, been forwarded from the Religious Tract Society of this town; and a deputation from the Trinity House of Newcastle, the funds of which will come under the operation of this bill, has gone to London to claim exemption. All this is gratifying, and must contribute not a little to the strong current of popular opinion now accumulating for the overthrow of this wretched attempt to infringe the just rights and liberties of Dissenters.—*Newcastle Guardian*.

CHARITABLE TRUSTS BILL.—We are gratified to observe accumulating proofs that the Lord Chancellor will find that, when, in conjunction with Lord Brougham, he undertook the concoction of the Charitable Trusts Bill, he engaged in a task far more difficult than he was led to imagine. The classes most interested in the measure—because the classes which would be most seriously affected by its operations—are beginning to understand its true character; and, as we have said from the first, the diffusion of proper information as to its scope and tendency was all that was necessary to array against it general and earnest hostility. We have reason to believe that numerous bodies connected with various religious and charitable institutions are now alive to the dangers impeding over them, and are considering how they may best avert them. A portion of the press, also, is giving valuable aid; and we may observe here that, so far as the press has spoken, it has been on the right side. We do not recollect to have seen in any of the journals which came under our notice a single line in support of the bill as prepared by its framers.—*Daily News*.

PETITIONS TO PARLIAMENT.—We find from the Parliamentary reports, that numerous petitions have been presented to the House of Lords against the Charitable Trusts Bill. On Thursday—

Lord Kinnaird presented a petition against this bill from the Religious Tract Society.

The Duke of Richmond presented a like petition from the liberty of Fevensay.

Lord Cottenham presented a petition from the governors of St. George's-hospital, who stated that 400,000 persons had passed through their hospital, and that their funds were properly managed, and praying, therefore, that they might be exempted from the operation of the bill; from the mayor and burgesses of Leicester, who objected to the bill, particularly as it affected Dissenters; and from Stourbridge, praying that the bill may not pass.

Viscount Strangford presented a petition against the bill from his brethren of the Skinners' Company.

Lord Denman presented like petitions from the London Baptist Association, and from the Baptist Union.

Lord Campbell also presented petitions against the bill from the Saddlers' Company, and from the Deaf and Dumb Asylum.

On Friday:—

The Earl of ELDON presented the following petitions against the Charitable Trusts Bill:—From the Trinity-house of Hull, from the Paperstainers' Company of London, from the parish of St. Mary, Whitechapel, London; and from trustees and others in the parish of Middlewich, Cheshire.

Lord BEAUMONT presented a petition from the Roman Catholics of Leigh-house, Lancashire, against the Charitable Trusts Bill.

On Monday:—

The Marquis of Salisbury presented a petition against this bill from the trustees of the Peterborough charities.

Lord Cottenham presented petitions against the bill from St. Dunstan's-in-the-East, Market Harborough, Stafford, Henley, Newcastle, Alnwick, Darlington, Manchester, Colchester, Devonport, Hungerford, Cheltenham, Bury St. Edmunds, and several other places.

The Earl of Eldon presented a like petition from Marlborough College, which had only received its incorporation last year, the managers of which were apprehensive of the provisions of this bill.

THE CHARITABLE TRUSTS BILL.—At a meeting of the North Staffordshire Congregational Union held last week, the bill was pointedly adverted to, and a committee formed to resist its progress.

PRESENTATION OF THE DUNCOMBE TESTIMONIAL.—The honourable member for Finsbury having fixed Saturday evening for receiving the above tribute of a people's gratitude, a deputation from the Central Committee, accompanied by Mr. Syme, the secretary, waited upon Mr. Duncombe at his chambers in the Albany, where they presented the magnificent piece of plate which had been purchased by the subscriptions of the working classes. The hon. gentleman expressed himself pleased beyond expression for this testimony of esteem, and assured the deputation that his services would always be at the disposal of the working classes.

PUNISHMENT OF DEATH IN AMERICA.—Four state-societies (with numerous auxiliaries) have been formed for the abolition of capital punishment. These state societies are New York, Pennsylvania, Maryland, and Massachusetts. And there is one United States, or general, convention for the same object, of which Mr. Dallis, the Vice-President of the United States, is President. Two newspapers are published expressly to further the cause—the *Prisoner's Friend*, at Boston, and the *Spirit of the Age*, in New York city. Besides these, a great multitude of secular and religious papers have spoken in favour of the measure. More than forty might be named in New York alone.—*Boston Paper*.

THE LIBERTY OF THE PRESS.

COURT OF EXCHEQUER, THURSDAY, APRIL 23.

GATHERCOLE v. MIAULL.

(From the *Times*.)

Sir T. WILDE moved in this case for a new trial, on the ground of misrecognition of evidence and misdirection. The case was one which was tried by Mr. Baron Parke, at the last assizes for the city of Cambridge, and was an action for libel, the plaintiff complaining of an article inserted by the defendant in a newspaper, called the *Nonconformist*, of the 7th of January last, under the title of "The Self-appointed Peace-maker," and reflecting upon his character and conduct as the vicar of Chatteris, a large and important parish in the Isle of Ely, to which he had recently been presented. In the course of this article, which was very lengthy, and was given *verbatim* in our report of the trial, severe comment was made on the conduct adopted by the rev. plaintiff towards the Dissenters, who abounded in his parish, and also on the rules and regulations of a club established by the plaintiff, under the title of "The Chatteris Church Clothing Society," which were formed on the principle of the exclusion of Dissenters, who were therein classed with drunkards, schismatics, opium eaters, and persons addicted to deadly sins. In the course of the plaintiff's case, the learned Baron admitted parole testimony of the contents of a copy of the newspaper containing the libel in question, which was sent down gratuitously to the Chatteris Reading-room, by some unknown hand, and after having been read and passed about, from hand to hand, for some weeks, was nowhere to be found, though the rooms were searched in every direction for it. On this evidence the keeper of the rooms was allowed to prove the identity of that paper with the copy on which the action was founded. On the part of the defendant, Mr. Serjeant Byles contended, that the comments were such as were fair, and might be justifiably published, and concerning the sermons which had been preached, and the regulations which had been drawn up by the plaintiff. The learned Baron, however, interrupted the learned counsel, and laid it down at that time, that neither the sermons nor regulations were the subject of criticism, and thereupon the learned serjeant decided from that line of remark. When, however, the learned judge proceeded to sum up the case to the jury, he in some measure qualified the proposition touching the sermons, by withdrawing that question from their consideration, as one which did not arise by reason of the absence of all proof of any such sermons having ever been preached, but he still retained his opinion, and stated it to be, that unless a sermon was printed and thereby published to the world by a clergyman, as well as delivered in his pulpit, it was not competent to the press to make it the subject of comment and criticism; and he distinctly directed the jury that the conduct of a clergyman, in respect to the administration of charity within his parish, was altogether exempt from observation and remark. On these several grounds it was now contended that there had been a miscarriage at the trial, and that the case ought to be submitted to another jury. As to the improper reception of the evidence, it was submitted, that no sufficient ground had been laid to enable the plaintiff's counsel to give secondary evidence of the contents of the copy of the paper sent to the reading-rooms; and, as it was used in aggravation of damages, the jury were no doubt influenced to give such a verdict as they did by that among other considerations. With respect to the other ground of motion, it was contended that the learned Baron had laid down in the broadest terms a proposition which could not be sustained and embodied—a principle which had given rise to very great public remark, namely, that a sermon, if not printed and published, could not be made the subject of remark and criticism.

Mr. Baron PARKE: What I said has been misunderstood. I certainly interfered in the course of my brother Byles' address, with the view of saving time, and I might then have said that sermons were not the subject of remark; but when I came to sum up the case to the jury, I expressly withdrew that question from them, as one which it was unnecessary to decide, for it did not arise, though I entertained, and still entertain, a strong opinion, that sermon does not afford any justifiable occasion for comment. At all events, I am confident that whatever I said did not operate to prevent Mr. Serjeant Byles from offering proof.

Sir T. WILDE would not contend that the plaintiff was not entitled to the verdict, even if the defendant were to be allowed the greatest license of criticism: but the jury were misdirected, as the defendant contends, on both points, as regards the sermons and regulations, by the proposition of the learned Baron, who ought rather to have told them that they were to consider whether the comments of the defendant were fair and proper, as being passed on subjects of public interest. Both a sermon and a charitable society in a parish are matters of public interest. This was a large parish. The church is open to the public, and so ought a parochial charity to be, if the object of that virtue is to be accomplished. This charity was, however, limited to a particular denomination—the Church; and its rules were couched in terms most slanderous of Dissenters generally. It is, therefore, contended that it is open to the press to discuss fairly and properly both the delivered sermons of a clergyman and the rules which he, as vicar of a parish, may frame for the guidance of parochial charity. This article may, perhaps, exceed the bounds of fair and proper criticism, but that was a question which was never submitted to the jury, who were told that there was no right to comment on either at all. It is impossible not to feel that whatever falls from so eminent a judge must greatly influence a jury, and control a coun-

sel in the exercise of his discretion in the conduct of the case. Here an opinion was expressed at one time, which went to exclude both sermons and regulations from criticism; but nothing can be more public than sermons delivered in a large parish, and regulations concerning the administration of the charity within that parish. They are both subjects of public interest, and were therefore fairly open to criticism.

Mr. BARON PARKE: I never meant to bind myself to the opinion I had expressed in the course of my brother's speech, as to the exemption of sermons, though I had then, and since have, a strong opinion that they ought to be so, unless they are printed, and so made public property by a clergyman; but when I came to sum up, I expressly guarded myself, and did not lay it down so broadly, as it was unnecessary to decide the point, which never arose, for no sermon was proved. With respect to the rules of the club, I did not think that they afforded any occasion which could justify any comment being made on them. I so directed the jury, and it is for the court to say whether I was right or wrong in so doing.

The learned Barons having deliberated together for a short time, the following judgments were respectively pronounced by the members of the Court:—

The LOAD CHIEF BARON: We are all agreed in this case that there ought to be no rule. As to the first point, it is clear that the evidence of the contents of the lost paper was properly received. The second point, on misdirection, proceeds on the objection that my brother Parke laid down the same rule of law with regard to sermons which were preached, and the regulations of the charity club, as is applicable to private conversation, while it is contended that they both justify remarks passed on them, with truth and justice, provided they are honest and *bond fide*, and that such remarks can be justified under the general issue. Sir T. Wilde has argued this as a case of great importance, and it is undoubtedly one of vast and grave importance. He concluded that the law ought to allow public opinion to operate on these subjects, on the ground that public interests demanded a supervision of them. I certainly agree that all measures of a public nature ought to be subject to comment, and that all *bond fide* and honest remarks on public parties ought to be allowed; but we must take care not to allow that feeling to carry us along when the interests of the public are pressed, with the object of pushing that doctrine too far. The commentator may comment on everything, provided truth be the foundation, and justice the superstructure of his comment, and that doctrine must be applied to the two questions which have been raised to-day. I must say that I for one go with my brother Parke. I think that a sermon preached by a pastor to his congregation may be made the subject of fair comment, provided that you do so with truth. Mr. Baron Parke, however, did not exclude any proof of a sermon, and in the course of the cause, and of the summing up, he expressly drew the attention of the learned counsel to the fact, that no sermon had been proved. On this ground alone I think the rule may be refused. As to the regulations, I quite agree that licentious comments cannot be applied to such. When a work is published criticism is invited; but here the question is, whether a parochial charity, with the vicar at its head, and confined in its application to certain parties, may be made the subject of licentious criticism. It is enough to apply the ordinary rule to this case, namely, that everybody may comment on everything if truth and justice be observed, and I therefore think that as that rule has been transgressed, there is no ground laid for a new trial.

Mr. Baron ALDERSON: I am of the same opinion; but though I think there ought to be no rule, yet if the question had been simply whether sermons are open to criticism, I should have doubted about refusing it. At the same time I am by no means sure that I should not have agreed with my brother Parke's view on that subject. I think that this rule ought to be refused on the first ground most clearly; and as to the misdirection, if my brother had told the jury that to observe on sermons preached by clergymen was not within the law, I should have doubted very much whether I could adopt that direction, though I might ultimately have come to the same opinion which my lord and my brother entertain. It seems to me that the distinction between the right to comment on public and private matters and men is very difficult of comprehension; where the limits are I don't exactly see, or where they begin or end. You may comment on a judge or an actor as such. You may say a judge is not clear, or an actor is not fit to represent certain parts; but you cannot observe on their private characters and conduct. I do not exactly see where the limits are to be pointed out. I think you may say, perhaps, that a man is a bad preacher: the dulness of a sermon is a very proper subject of comment and public opinion. Perhaps you have a right to comment on the doctrine contained in a sermon; for there is a proper court which has cognizance over unsound doctrines put forth in sermons. Now this act of preaching a sermon is done in the ministerial public capacity of a clergyman. He is bound to preach, and that is why I doubt whether he is liable to comment on that score; but as to the administration of a charity established by him in his parish, that is no part of his public duty. He differs, therefore, in that respect, in nothing from any other private individual who may institute a charity within his parish, and select the objects of participation. Such acts are protected from comment as the acts of private individuals; and, though every man may comment on private charities, he must do so in the same way when they are conducted by clergymen as by any other private individual. A clergyman differs in nothing from any other man by reason of that character, and is no more open to comment than any other private person is. That is my judgment, and I therefore think this rule must be refused.

Mr. Baron ROLFE: I am of the same opinion with my brother Alderson, and I will say nothing as to the evidence; but as to the misdirection, I think this must be taken to have been a formal direction to the jury as to the charity, though not so as to the sermons, for my brother Parke corrected himself afterwards. The question then is, whether my brother Parke was right in telling the jury that this charity was such as to entitle the defendant to the privilege of commenting on its rules.

[APRIL 29,

as he might on any public acts. It was argued at first as though the direction had been, that the policy of having charities from which Dissenters were to be excluded was not to be discussed. But that was not the way in which it was put at the trial. If it had been, I should have gone along with Sir T. Wilde in contending for a right to comment on such a policy. That is a public act which would warrant observation, and I may take this opportunity of saying, that comments on public sermons would have come within the category of public acts. That, however, does not arise; for the observation was expressly withdrawn from the jury. But as to the rules, I think it most preposterous to say that the conduct of a clergyman in administering a charity is not within the category of public acts on which comments may be made. These comments, however, were not fair. There is no pretence for that; and as this was a mere private administration of charity, I think it is protected from comment, though we may doubt the propriety of the course adopted by the defendant.

Mr. Baron PARKE: I merely wish to add a word or two as to the question whether I was right in saying that no occasion was afforded by the plaintiff's conduct respecting the rules, to warrant the comments of the defendant. I certainly entered more fully than I would have done under ordinary circumstances into the law of libel in this case, and having done so, I intimated to the jury that I thought these rules afforded no occasion which could render the comments of the defendant excusable; while I told them, that if any such occasion had been given, the defendant might resort to it under the general issue. As to the sermons, I entertained a strong opinion that a clergyman, by preaching verbal sermons, did not make them public property, as when he was preaching a sermon in the ordinary discharge of his duty as a pastor in his parish church. I thought that that afforded no sufficient occasion for comment, and with all due respect to the judgment of my brother Rolfe, I think so still; but I never so directed the jury. Rule refused.

This application (says the *Morning Chronicle*) occupied the Court during the greater part of the day, and appeared to excite considerable interest at the bar.

OPINIONS OF THE PRESS ON THE LATE TRIAL.

(From the *Spectator*.)

The privilege of the pulpit appears to be as knotty a point of law as the privilege of Parliament. The four judges of the Court of Exchequer talked at it for some good hours on Thursday, but only to show that they were full of doubts and misgivings on the matter.

As in the case of Parliament, so in that of the pulpit, the privilege most tenaciously asserted is that of saying with impunity things that would subject other utterers to actions of libel, or at the very least to disagreeable animadversion.

It was incidentally, *apropos*, of a motion for a new trial in the action of the Reverend Mr. Gathercole against Mr. Miall of the *Nonconformist*, that the discussion arose. It was maintained, on behalf of the reverend gentleman, that anything a clergyman may be pleased to say in a sermon, as being said in the discharge of his official duty, is privileged even from comment; and that anything he says, writes, or prints, in administering a charity among parishioners, is entitled to the same immunity.

Mr. Baron Parke entertains a "strong opinion" that a clergyman in preaching verbal sermons, in the ordinary discharge of his duty as a pastor in his parish-church, does not make them public property; and that he therefore does not afford sufficient occasion for comment. And Mr. Baron Parke has an opinion quite as strong, that anything a clergyman may introduce into the regulations of a charity club, composed of parishioners, enjoys the same privilege. Mr. Baron Alderson thinks that it is an open question whether sermons are liable to criticism, but is at the same time "by no means sure" that he does not agree with his brother Parke. The Chief Baron and Baron Rolfe dissent from this view; but, as Baron Parke pithily wound up the argument, "with all due deference to my brother Rolfe, I think so still."

If Baron Parke's views of pulpit privilege are correct—and the question is obviously undecided—it confers upon the clergy a power of rather an unpleasant nature for third parties. In the good old times, clergymen indulged in a wide latitude of personal animadversion. The sermons of some old Scotch divines—John Knox, Welsh, and Renwick, for example—took strange liberties in this way, not only with private individuals, but with their legitimate sovereigns; the "Merry Monarch" affording the last-named rather a rich subject. The practice has gone out of fashion, but is not entirely obsolete; and the sermons of the Reverend Mr. Gathercole are said to contain some curious specimens of this style of pulpit oratory. Again, the Reverend Mr. Gathercole, in his capacity of legislator for a charitable club, took upon him to classify Dissenters along with infidels and drunkards. A gratuitous insult of this kind, to a respectable class, is not calculated to promote mutual forbearance, and that kindly peace which is desirable among neighbours; and free scope given to personal attack in the pulpit may be productive of serious injury to individuals.

It is not easy to find out a defence against this invidious privilege of the pulpit. One is conceivable in such a case as the resolutions of the charity club. It has been decided that the privilege of Parliament does not extend to its printer: vicarious animadversions might deter any printer from making himself the instrument of the vicar's spleen. The experiment is at least worth trying. But the case of the sermon seems hopeless. Often as newspaper printers and publishers have been punished for circulating libels spoken by members of Parliament, members will still offend at times.

"With all due deference" to Baron Parke, we venture to think the privilege of the pulpit uncalled for and untenable. Full power of rebuke, in so far as his own flock are concerned, may be indispensable to the due discharge of a pastor's functions; but it is not necessary that the power should be extended to the sheep of other folds. It appears that the privilege of the pulpit might, with advantage, be restricted, as Matthews might have said, to the "larrooping of their own niggers."

(From the *Examiner*.)

We refrain from comment on Mr. Baron Parke's charge in the case *Gathercole v. Miall*, under the strong impression that the learned judge's remarks and directions must have been misunderstood and misreported, so inconsistent did they seem to us with the general tenor of his judicial conduct.

The motion for a new trial, however, shows that we were mistaken in our surmise, and that Mr. Baron Parke held that a clergyman's sermon, and the regulations of a private

charity, were not fair subjects of criticism. It is true that, in charging the jury, he qualified his opinion as to the exemption of sermons from criticism, but as he had stopped the argument of the defendant's counsel on this point, he had so far unduly damaged the defence, and prejudiced the case in the judgment of the jury. As Sir Thomas Wilde remarked:

"It is impossible not to feel that whatever falls from so eminent a judge must greatly influence a jury, and control a counsel in the exercise of his discretion in the conduct of the case. Here an opinion was expressed at one time, which went to exclude both sermons and regulations from criticism; but nothing can be more public than sermons delivered in a large parish, and regulations concerning the administration of the charity within that parish."

Now let us hear Mr. Baron Parke's explanation of his doctrines:

"I never meant to bind myself to the opinion I had expressed in the course of my brother's speech, as to the exemption of sermons, though I had then, and since have, a strong opinion that they ought to be so, unless they are printed and so made public property by a clergyman; but, when I came to sum up, I expressly guarded myself, and did not lay it down so broadly, as it was unnecessary to decide the point, which never arose, for no sermon was proved. With respect to the rules of the club, I did not think that they afforded any occasion which could justify any comment being made on them. I so directed the jury, and it is for the Court to say whether I was right or wrong in so doing."

Now for the decision of the Court, and the grounds for it. The Chief Baron, having stated that the judges agreed unanimously to refuse the application, proceeded to explain the principles of the decision, as follows:

"I certainly agree that all measures of a public nature ought to be subject to comment, and that all *bond fide* and honest remarks on public parties ought to be allowed; but we must take care not to allow that feeling to carry us along when the interests of the public are pressed, with the object of pushing that doctrine too far. The commentator may comment on everything, provided truth be the foundation, and justice the super-structure of his comment, and that doctrine must be applied to the two questions which have been raised to-day. I must say that I for one go along with my brother Parke. I think that a sermon preached by a pastor to his congregation may be made the subject of fair comment, provided that you do so with truth. Mr. Baron Parke, however, did not exclude any proof of a sermon, and in the course of the cause, and of the summing up, he expressly drew the attention of the learned counsel to the fact, that no sermon had been proved. On this ground alone I think the rule may be refused. As to the regulations, I quite agree that licentious criticism cannot be applied to such. When a work is published, criticism is invited; but here the question is, whether parochial charity, with the vicar at its head, and confined in its application to certain parties, may be the subject of licentious criticism. It is enough to apply the ordinary rule to this case, namely, that everybody may comment on everything if truth and justice be observed, and I therefore think that, as that rule has been transgressed, there is no ground laid for a new trial."

We cannot find the agreement averred between the Chief Baron's opinion as to comment on sermons, and Mr. Baron Parke's. The former holds that a preached sermon may be the subject of comment, provided there be truth in the criticism. The latter maintains that, unless a sermon be printed and published, it is not open to remark. There is thus the widest difference between the two views.

Mr. Baron Alderson next delivers his opinion, and he seems to have been sorely perplexed and confused. He could not concur in the direction that to observe on a sermon was not within the law, and yet he doubted whether it should be allowable to comment on sermons, as the clergyman was obliged to preach them! Upon the same principle the comment on a minister's administration of affairs should be forbidden because the minister is bound to administer; and, indeed, the performance of all duties would be withdrawn from public stricture under this sage rule:

"Mr. Baron Alderson: I think that this rule ought to be refused on the first ground most clearly; and, as the misdirection, if my brother had told the jury, that to observe on sermons preached by clergymen was not within the law, I should have doubted very much whether I could adopt that direction, though I might ultimately have come to the same opinion which my Lord and my brother entertain. It seems to me that the distinction between the right of comment on public and private matters and men is very difficult of comprehension—where the limits are I do not exactly see, or where they begin or end. You may comment on a judge or an actor as such. You may say a judge is not clear, or an actor is not fit to represent certain parts; but you cannot observe on their private characters and conduct. I do not exactly see where the limits are to be pointed out. I think you may say, perhaps, that a man is a bad preacher: the dulness of a sermon is a very proper subject of comment and public opinion. Perhaps you have no right to comment on the doctrine contained in a sermon, for there is a proper court which has cognizance over unsound doctrines put forth in sermons. Now, this act of preaching a sermon is done in the ministerial public capacity of a clergyman. *He is bound to preach, and that is why I doubt whether he is liable to comment on that score;* but as to the administration of a charity established by him in his parish, that is no part of his public duty."

We now come to Mr. Baron Rolfe's view:

"The question is, whether my brother was right in telling the jury that this charity was such as to entitle the defendant to the privilege of commenting on its rules as he might on any public acts. It was argued at first as though the direction had been, that the policy of having charities from which Dissenters were to be excluded was not to be discussed. But that was not the way in which it was put at the trial. If it had been, I should have gone along with Sir T. Wilde in contending for a right to comment on such a policy. That is a public act which would warrant observation, and I may take this opportunity of saying, that comments on public sermons would have come within the category of public acts. That, however, does not arise; for the observation was expressly withdrawn from the jury. But as to the rules, I think it most preposterous to say that the conduct of a clergyman in administering a charity is not within the category of public acts on which comments may be made. Those comments, however, were not fair. There is no pretence for that; and as this was a mere private administration of charity, I think it is protected from comment, though we may doubt the propriety of the course adopted by the defendant."

The last sentence we cannot reconcile with the preceding, and suppose there must be error in the report.

And after this *reasoned* decision of the Court, who can pretend to say whether unprinted sermons are open to remark or not?

The Chief Baron appears to hold that they are fair subjects of comment in a truthful spirit; but he assumes all against the applicant to the Court in implying that his remarks are not of the nature permitted. Mr. Miall had no opportunity of vindicating himself on this important point, the judge having stopped his advocate's argument with the *dictum* that the sermon, whatever were its merits or demerits, was not open to remark.

The freedom of the Press is the freedom of written speech, and as every individual is at liberty to discuss the sermon he has heard, the writer in the Press claims the same right, subject to punishment for libel, as the other is for slander; if he transgress the fair bounds of criticism.

As for the exemption of the rules of a private charity from observation, we cannot understand how any reasonable beings can set up such a pretence. The rules of a private charity, like all other things, should be protected against misrepresentation and calumny, and that is all.

Rules, bearing the names of rules of a private charity, may, as alleged in this very case, be so drawn up as to convey a series of the most uncharitable and malignant libels, and what would be the policy and justice of the law in protecting them against exposure and animadversion?

The judges seem to have thought that the rules in this instance did not merit the attack on them; but then the jury trying the defendant should have been instructed to

consider whether the animadversions on the rules were borne out or not by their import, and not that to remark upon them at all was out of the province of a public writer.

(From the *Morning Chronicle*.)

The position of a parochial clergyman, we would contend, is one which necessarily gives a public character to all acts which he does in virtue of that position. Public opinion, to a certain extent, regards the charities of a parish as falling within the province of the clergyman. In all matters relating to charity he does undoubtedly possess a peculiar influence, in virtue of his public functions. The public have a right to know how he uses that influence. A public writer is justified in denouncing an abuse of it. If Mr. Gathercole be a bad friend or unkind husband, that is a matter of private character, with which, neither in him nor in any one else, has the press anything to do. But if he misuse the influence of his sacred position in the direction given to the charities of his parish, he commits an offence against the public interests which public opinion is concerned in checking.

We cannot conceive a case in which the interference of the press could be more needed, and more justifiably exercised, than in that detailed by Sir Thomas Wilde. A clergyman coming into a parish, finds a numerous Dissenting population living in harmony with the members of the Established Church, and co-operating with them in all their charities. He is alleged to have used the influence of his position to destroy this state of things—broken up the existing charitable associations—formed a society on exclusive sectarian principles—and in a document, to which he got the assent of a portion of his parishioners, offered the most unwarrantable insults to the remainder. The man who does this, prostitutes his holy function to the worst and most mischievous purposes. He is a nuisance and firebrand, whom every public writer is justified in endeavouring to render harmless by exposure. And courts of justice, instead of shielding his acts from the indignation of the press, should encourage those who, by bringing into light such derelictions of duty, take the best means of preventing the desecration of a sacred function, and of ensuring the efficiency of the Established church.

MEETING AT NORWICH AGAINST CAPITAL PUNISHMENTS.—A public meeting of the inhabitants of Norwich, in pursuance of a requisition to the Mayor, was held at St. Andrew's hall, on Friday evening, the 17th inst., for the purpose of expressing public opinion on the subject of punishment by death, and for adopting a petition to the Legislature for its immediate discontinuance. The Mayor occupied the chair, and the meeting was addressed with much effect by Joseph Geldart, Esq., Mr. Brock, Baptist minister, J. J. Gurney, Esq., Mr. Willet, Mr. Cooke, Wesleyan minister, &c. The *Norfolk News* reports the speeches at great length, and we regret that the demand upon our space will not allow us to copy them. The following petition to Parliament was adopted:

To the House of Commons in Parliament assembled.

We, the undersigned inhabitants of the city of Norwich, are constrained by a sense of Christian duty to represent to the House of Commons in Parliament assembled that the state of this city, on the day of the execution of a criminal convicted of murder at the last assizes, afforded a clear and unquestionable proof that such shocking spectacles have a fearfully hardening and demoralising effect on the vast multitudes of both sexes which crowd together to witness the violent death of a fellow-creature. We think they cannot fail grievously to weaken and lower the estimate of human life; and they have, in our opinion, a decided tendency to promote rather than restrain the crime of murder and other brutal and licentious offences against the laws of God and man.

We are of the judgment that the return of executions for murder made to the House of Commons, August 17th, 1843, decidedly confirms this view of the subject, plainly evincing, in connexion with common observations, that the more numerous are these executions, the more frequently that horrible crime is afterwards found to be perpetrated.

Experience in this and other countries has, as we apprehend, abundantly demonstrated that the abolition of capital enactments is both safe and advantageous to the public, having been followed by a marked diminution, as compared with other offences, of the crimes which had been previously so punished.

For these and other reasons, while we are thankful to the Legislature for the vast improvement which has already taken place in our criminal code, we earnestly entreat the House of Commons that the punishment of death—unnecessary and highly prejudicial, as we consider it to be, even when applied to the most heinous and desperate offences—may be entirely and for ever abolished.

THE PEACE MOVEMENT.—During the past week auxiliaries to the "Society for the Promotion of Permanent and Universal Peace" have been formed at Ipswich and Norwich.—The "friendly address" to the citizens of New York, on the pending differences between this country and the United States, which appeared in our columns last week, says the *Leeds Times*, was forwarded on Saturday evening, to go by the Cambria steamer, addressed to the Mayor of New York. It was signed by the Mayor of Leeds, by the Vicar, and several of the clergy, by Edward Baines, Esq., J. G. Marshall, Esq., Messrs. Becket and Co., and Messrs. Brown and Co., bankers, and by nearly all the leading mercantile and manufacturing firms and influential residents.—The *Western Times*, after mentioning that the address to the citizens of America had been despatched, signed by upwards of 1,500 persons, headed by the name of the Right Worshipful the Mayor, and many of the magistrates and clergy, gentlemen of the legal and medical professions, and other influential classes, says, "We observe with pleasure, that the ladies of Exeter, stimulated by the example of the rougher sex, and determined not to be behindhand in the work of peace, have also plucked the olive branch, to hold out to their American sisters. A ladies' address to the women of Philadelphia is now in course of signature, and will be sent off in a few days."—Mr. N. Pearse, late of the 55th regiment of Foot, has been lecturing with great success at Bristol, Bridgewater, &c., on the Horrors of War. The lecturer increases the interest by exhibiting various views of a soldier's life, by the aid of a powerful magic lantern.

ADDRESS TO THE KING OF THE FRENCH.—At the meeting of the Glasgow Town Council, on Thursday, an address to the King of the French, congratulating him on his preservation from the late attempt on his life, was unanimously adopted.

LIBERTY OF THE PRESS.

Pursuant to a public announcement headed as above, a meeting of the friends of civil and religious liberty was held at the British school-room, Kingsland, on Wednesday evening, April 22nd, to consider the circumstances of the case of *Gathercole v. Miall*, and to adopt such measures as might be deemed right. The chair was taken at seven o'clock by T. S. Duncombe, Esq., M.P. The spacious building was completely filled by a respectable and enthusiastic audience. Letters were read from Drs. Campbell and Price, Revs. J. Jefferson, T. Aveling, and J. Hartley, and Mr. Henry Vincent, all expressing hearty concurrence with the object of the meeting, and regret at inability to attend.

The CHAIRMAN, in opening the meeting, said: We are convened together this evening to consider the attack upon the liberties of the press involved in the recent extraordinary trial, "*Gathercole v. Miall*." I call it an extraordinary case [hear, hear]. At first I hoped—in justice to what I regard as the constitutional law—that the decision had been misrepresented, by some mistake on the part of the press. But such is not the case. It is simply thus—Mr. Miall, the editor of the *Nonconformist* newspaper—a highly talented gentleman, whom I deem it an honour to call my friend—had inserted in that journal an article containing some observations and strictures upon the conduct of Mr. Gathercole, the vicar of Chatteris, in the execution of his office. This Mr. Gathercole began life as a Dissenter; but after a certain time he was induced—and be it observed, I give him credit for conscientious feeling in so doing—to leave the Dissenters, and attach himself to the established Church. In this new connexion he was more fortunate than he had been; for he was appointed to the rich living of Chatteris, having previously been convicted of publishing libels, which I have read with disgust, upon the body he had left. Mr. Miall designated him a 'twice convicted libeller,' and therefore he brought the action in question, which was tried last month at Cambridge. Now, of all places in the world to try such a question, I should least choose Oxford or Cambridge; but there the case was tried, relying doubtless on the justice of it. A verdict was found for £200. It does not appear who composed the jury on that occasion—they may have been Nonconformists, or they may have been Gathercoleites [laughter]; I should think the latter, for surely no other twelve men would have come to such a decision, much less have given such damages. But that is not all. The great point is, whether opinions were not propounded by Mr. Baron Parke, in summing up, hostile and dangerous to the freedom of the press? Mr. Baron Parke said, that he had yet to learn that the press had any right to comment on the conduct of a clergyman in discharging the duties of his parish, or upon an unpublished sermon. If that be the law, it is time the law should be altered [loud cheers]; but I do not believe it is the law. Is it possible, that a minister of religion, receiving large sums of money from the country, is not a public functionary, and subject to the same criticism to which others are liable? If this principle be once admitted, we shall next be told, that the press must not make observations on the proceedings in Parliament. This doctrine is a very convenient one, doubtless—just as it is often convenient to keep out of sight the proceedings of the ecclesiastical courts, which have been characterised by the most disgraceful acts [applause]. I will now leave the subject in your hands.

Mr. C. DUKES, Independent minister, proposed the first resolution. He said: A Christian minister never need apologise for doing right; and I think I am doing right in being here, because when the liberty of the press is attacked, I ought to use all the influence I possess in its defence. Character is the most valuable thing:—

"Who steals my purse, steals trash; 'tis something, nothing—
'Twas mine—'tis his, and has been slave to thousands;
But he who filches from me my good name
Robs me of that which not enriches him,
And leaves me poor indeed."

Public men are particularly exposed to attacks upon their character; but the law affords them protection from unjust attacks. The British constitution, I apprehend, protects the life, property, and character of every subject; but, at the same time, admits that every individual is amenable to public opinion. The man who does wrong, deserves to have his offence exposed, denounced, and frowned upon. I happen to know something of the locality in which this extraordinary affair originated. I resided for some time within eight miles of Chatteris. This is a very favourite spot for the Church of England. The living of Chatteris is worth fully £2,000 per annum, perhaps more; and, immediately adjoining it, is the extraordinary parish of Doddington, in which there are 4,000 (as we understood the speaker) acres of land, paying 5s. 6d. tithe per acre: you can easily reckon what that amounts to. A number of individuals, for certain reasons, left the Established Church in Chatteris and formed an Independent church; but, not being actuated by sectarian feeling, they were quite willing to continue to support the existing benevolent institutions of the neighbourhood. Here is the gentleman inducted to this living. The moment he arrives, he announces that he intends to have nothing to do with Dissenters, and is determined to cut them off from the benefits of these charitable societies. This man, we are told, has a perfect right to act thus if he please, and no one is to write about it. Now, I shall not say one word about the terms in which his conduct was condemned in the article referred to. Some persons may think the *Nonconformist* had better simply have published the facts without any comment; others may think the English language afforded no terms sufficient to express public indignation and scorn [cheers]. There is a variety of opinion about that; it is a matter of taste. But the thing we have to do with is this—is a clergyman at liberty to do "what he will with his own"? That may do for a coroneted duke, but not for a spliced clergyman [laughter]. Is a public functionary to use public money, and to wield the influence which that money gives him, as he pleases, and not to

be called to account? An honourable mind does not shrink from, but invites and delights in, public attention and scrutiny at all times and under all circumstances. The assassin may love darkness, for his deeds are evil; but the honourable man—the Christian minister, who knows that he has done nothing of which he need be ashamed—will say to the public, "Let your eyes be upon me." If we must not print our opinions, I suppose we must not speak them. At all events, if we are in danger, it is in good company; I don't know whether the Speaker of the House of Commons will give you, sir, into the custody of the usher of the black rod [laughter]. That kind of thing may do for the meridian of Rome, but not for the meridian of Greenwich [laughter and cheers]. There is something so genial in the moral atmosphere of this country that we feel rather inclined to walk upright—to look Baron Parke in the face, and say, very respectfully but very firmly, "We won't have it—we don't believe it; and while Lord Denman is on the bench we won't give in till we hear what he has to say about it" [much cheering]. Mr. Duke concluded by moving the first resolution, which, with the succeeding resolutions, will be found in our advertising columns.

EBENEZER CLARKE, Esq., seconded the resolution. He rejoiced to find there were still some British hearts and hands ready to uphold the man who would dare to serve the public by exposing evil systems and evil doers. Mr. Miall deserved the gratitude and support of all who valued civil and religious liberty, even though he had committed an indiscretion in allowing the objectionable article to see the light. He (Mr. Clarke) believed that the excitement created by this case, would go far to create an omnipotent public opinion in favour of the separation of church and state, "a consumption devoutly to be wished" [great cheering].

Dr. EPPS proposed the next resolution. He spoke to the following effect:—To understand the position in which we are now placed, is not only to be acquainted with a case of gross injustice, but also to get into our minds the materials from which we may work out that which shall prevent our being again placed in such a position. The attacks of an enemy are often very useful, by showing us our weak points, and putting us upon our guard; and this dictum of Baron Parke's shows us what it is we have to fight against, and the nature of that greatest enemy to public freedom, a state-church [cheers]. It has taught us, that the Established Church is despotism in itself—a despotism of the most egregiously wicked character—which, while it claims for its ministers apostolical succession, would cover up their proceedings from public observation [cheers]. As to the *Nonconformist*, I often wonder how its editor contrives to tell the most severe truths—that is, severe to those who are concerned—in the most terse, beautiful, and elegant language, and so that it is like being cut by a sharp keen razor, instead of being hacked by a horrid saw [laughter]. Possessing highly the sarcastic talent, and yet having the gentleness not to use it—being, too, the representation of the onward march of liberal dissent [cheers]. However much we may wish that he had said, "Gathercole was once convicted," instead of "twice convicted," I cannot see much fault in that; especially as that first conviction would have made Gathercole, if he had any sensibility to shame, retire into the deepest privacy for the rest of his life. But let us hear what Baron Parke says about this law of libel; let us take his own words. [Dr. Epps then read, and commented on, in a very perspicuous manner, the definition given by the learned judge of libel, and what would render it justifiable. He remarked on the equivocal tone employed by Baron Parke in speaking of the rights of the press—"I have yet to learn," &c.; and the more decided terms in which the distribution of parish charities is referred to. Dr. Epps continued—] His mind is made up on this latter point, a clergyman is not to be criticised in discharging the duties of his parish. What is a parish? A division of the country, marked out by law for ecclesiastical purposes. You all belong to a parish. The rector has the charge of your souls; and it is only by his neglect or premission that you are here to-night. You are legally liable to a fine of one shilling each every Sunday you are absent from church [laughter]. There is a sacredness round about the rectors of these parishes—just as there is a halo of glory round the heads of saints in their pictures, not in their persons; they did not use to carry the halo about with them [renewed laughter]. Baron Parke has invested clergymen with the halo of sacredness and privilege, and there it must remain till Sir Thomas Wilde cuts it away [cheers and laughter]. We must get the opinion of the judges on the matter; and if they say it is law, we must call upon the legislature to repeal that law [great cheering]. For the present, if a clergyman spit upon you, you must not even say, "Sir, you spat upon me!" I will show you how this Gathercole spits. [Dr. Epps then read several quotations from the letters of L. S. E., in which dissent is spoken of as the offspring of the depraved human heart; and the devil is designated, "the first Dissenter." He then continued:—] The sixth rule of the Chatteris Clothing Club the rector has framed thus:—"That in accordance with the apostolical injunction, 'to do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith,' the benefits of this club be conferred only on members of Christ's holy church resident in Chatteris." "The apostolical injunction:" mark the cant of that! "The members of Christ's holy church resident in Chatteris:" we have no objection to that, for Christ's holy church embraces all good men everywhere [hear, hear]. There is no altar-piece but the human heart. Those of you who believe that Christ came into this world, believe that he offered the only sacrifice required; and that all who approach the true God through this medium, to "worship him in spirit and in truth," are accepted by Him [hear, hear]. But the church of Chatteris is not the church of Christ, say rather of the devil; it worships not the God of love, but the God of compulsion—it takes away the poor man's bible and the poor poor widow's bed—it is a prostitution of that glorious phrase, "the holy church of Christ" [loud cheers]. This Gathercole was once a Dissenter, and in describing dissent he only described his own former spurious dissent: true dissent was too pure for him. Tell Mr. Miall, then, that he shall not only be un-

harmed for telling the truth, but honoured for it [much cheering]. He considered that it would be the duty of the public not merely to raise enough to pay the expenses of the trial, but that they should put into Mr. Miall's purse some £200 or so, to form a crown of glory for his untiring advocacy of civil and religious freedom [loud cheers]. I have great pleasure in being here tonight, and uttering my testimony against state-churchism. I have seen its workings in the scientific world; and I know that by misrepresenting religion, it is the chief cause of the infidelity there prevailing [hear, hear]. May the huge incubus upon human industry and thought, soon be buried, as is predicted of Babylon, in the sea of truth! [loud and long-continued applause]. Dr. Epps concluded by moving the resolution.

Mr. G. WILKINS, in proposing the third resolution, said that he should be recreant to his principles if he did not take this opportunity of testifying to them. He admired Mr. Miall as possessing a powerful intellect, a large and benevolent heart, and true Christian feeling. He was full of love to humanity—full of hatred to oppression. He was ever ready to expose injustice and wrong, whether in Dissenting or Episcopal circles. While he was the constant assailant of ecclesiastical tyranny, he did not overlook the tyranny of Dissent [hear, hear]; his powerful pen was ready to defend the injured, whether among Dissenters or Churchmen. He deserved, therefore, the sympathy and support of all who could admire or appreciate him. They should not merely defray the expenses to which he had been thus exposed, but give him some testimonial of their regard [cheers].

Mr. J. COX said the relative position of the two parties reminded him of John Bunyan's story of *Innocence and Illwill*—the latter pelted the former with dirt, but it would not stick. Baron Parke had clearly shown, if his *dictum* were true, that modern clergymen were not the successors of the apostles; for when an apostle was guilty of dissimulation, one of his brethren not only verbally reproved him, but published that reproof in an epistle which had gone all over the world. If there had been a Cambridge judge and jury in those days, what damages might the libelled apostle have got! [laughter and cheers]. He cordially seconded the resolution.

Dr. HEWLETT: It has long been a branch of the Government of this country, to have a representative assembly; and though that representative assembly has not kept pace with the progress of free opinion, yet there is one with us to-night who has honourably and consistently represented the borough for which he sits [loud cheers], protecting all religion without respect to peculiar opinions or parties. This meeting would never have been held, nor this grievance inflicted, if justice had been simply and impartially administered to every member of the state, irrespective of his religious opinions. Let us all be treated alike, and then all will be satisfied. Is the civil power to interfere with the convictions of our judgment—to look into the inner chambers of our mind, to control our conscience, and dictate to us what we shall believe, and how we shall feel? I say, that we are going back to the days of the Star-chamber. I say this advisedly. If this Charitable Trusts Bill passes, we shall be compelled to give up our books and accounts, relating to our religious charitable associations, to the inspection of commissioners. But the following is the motion I have to propose to you. [Dr. Hewlett then read the fourth resolution amidst loud applause.] Sir, I will only add, these voices that are raised, these hands that are clapped, are prompted by hearts which honour and confide in you, sir.

Mr. WASHINGTON WILKS (who was introduced to the meeting as Editor of the *Reformer*) seconded the motion. He said—The circumstances of this case have been so lucidly stated to you, and the duty you owe to Mr. Miall, to yourselves, and to the great principles of justice and freedom, has been so powerfully enforced, that I will not add one word on the subject; but just call your attention to the three epithets applied in the resolution to the parliamentary conduct of our chairman—"manly, vigorous, and consistent." 'Manly'—aye; in my humble judgment, there is more true courage and manliness in proclaiming unwelcome truths to an august and hostile assembly—in standing alone, or in a 'miserable minority'—than in facing a discharge of artillery or a line of bayonets [cheers]. 'Vigorous'—pressing forward, in conjunction with Sharman Crawford, session after session, and night after night, the rights of the people. 'Consistent'—even in the season of greatest temptation—in the matter of the Maynooth Endowment Bill—when the most plausible reasons were assigned for temporary defection. Even then, there was a noble trio—a triumvirate that shall eclipse the triumviri of Rome—who asserted the voluntary principle, as put forth in Mr. Crawford's amendment—Charles Hindley, Thomas Wakley, and Thomas Slingsby Duncombe [cheers]. They said, We will not insult Ireland with this pauper bribe; but will do justice to Ireland, by removing her monster grievance. Would that we had a few more such men to lead on the people to this holy war—this new crusade, not for the recovery of the sepulchre, but for the deliverance of Christianity from her prison-house [cheers]. We have been told to-night, that the days of the Stuarts are returning upon us. Well, be it so; we have also, I trust, a revival of the spirit which overthrew that dynasty—a young nonconformity, eager to emulate the deeds of our fathers [cheers]. It was in Westminster Hall that John Hampden grappled with Prelacy and Aristocracy, and there, it seems, must we renew the struggle. I have no fear for the ultimate result [hear, hear]. State-churchism—that greatest barrier to the progress of divine truth and human freedom—must disappear before the advancing tide of intelligence. The noise of its submersion in the waters of knowledge, that shall one day cover the whole earth, will be followed by shouts of joy and songs of thankfulness from the emancipated millions of our race [loud applause].

The motion having been carried amidst enthusiastic and repeated applause,

The CHAIRMAN returned thanks in the following language: I wish I possessed any merit, or had performed any services, to entitle me to the encomiums of the gentlemen who proposed and seconded this last resolution, to which you have so cordially responded.

In the discharge of my public duty, I have done no more than the electors of Finsbury sent me to Parliament to do. In the discharge of that duty I have certainly had to come in contact with the spirit of ecclesiastical tyranny. Poor John Thorogood, as you may probably remember, suffered eighteen months' imprisonment in Chelmsford gaol, for the conscientious non-payment of 4s. 6d.; and he would have remained there till now, had Providence spared his life so long, so far as the Church authorities were concerned, if I had not induced Parliament to purge him of the crime of contempt of the ecclesiastical courts [cheers]. On other occasions I have been too, as my friend has said, in "miserable minorities;" but I have been sustained and encouraged by knowing, that I was supported by a large majority—an enlightened majority—of the people [cheers]. I have been much pleased with the sentiments expressed by some of the speakers to-night. I could have wished that Baron Parke, and the jury whom he charged, had been here. I could wish that these sentiments were uttered in the House of Commons, and that some of the gentlemen who have addressed you to-night were with me there [laughter and cheers]. Reference has been made to an ultimate intention of bringing forward this matter in the House of Commons. It would be of no use to make it a subject of conversation there; Dissenters would only be abused much as they have been by Gatheroole [a laugh]. The only way, it appears to me, is to propose an alteration of the law of libel. I shall be very happy to give any such measure my warmest support, confident, that in so doing, I should only represent the opinions and feelings of the most enlightened portion of the community at large [great cheering].

Several names were announced as subscribers to the fund, among which was that of Mr. Duncombe, to the amount of £5. From a letter of Mr. Miall's, which was read to the meeting, it appeared that the expenses of the first trial would be about £500; it would cost about £200 more to go into a higher court; and, in the event of being cast in, a second trial, should one be obtained, about £700 or £800 additional expense might be incurred.

MR. VINCENT'S LECTURES.—DUNSTABLE, BEDS.—Mr. Henry Vincent has visited this small town, and has received a most enthusiastic reception from all classes of the inhabitants. He addressed two meetings in the large Temperance-hall, which was crowded to overflowing—the first, On Civil and Religious Liberty; and the second, On the Mental and Moral Elevation of the People. Preparations are being made for three more meetings on complete suffrage and other kindred questions.—**LUTON, BEDS.**—Mr. Henry Vincent has opened the Mechanics' Institution in this town by two public addresses on the social, moral, and mental elevation of the people. The largest hall in the town was secured, and the tickets were sold at 1s. 6d. for each lecture. The hall was crowded—such meetings were never held in Luton. Mr. Little, Episcopalian minister, occupied the chair. Mr. Vincent's addresses were welcomed with enthusiastic cheering. The result of the meetings, in a pecuniary point of view, was most satisfactory. The committee has been able to vote £20 for the purchase of books. Mr. Vincent has since addressed two large meetings on the temperance question, and next week lectures on civil and religious liberty and complete suffrage; after which a large *soirée* is to be given to him by the friends of liberty, education, and temperance generally. Mr. Vincent has also lectured at Baldock on the subject of education.

THE RELIGIOUS TRACT SOCIETY.—In the Court of Queen's Bench, on Wednesday last, it was decided by the judges that the above society was liable to poor-rates, notwithstanding its having obtained from Mr. Tidd Pratt a certificate, stating that it was a society formed for the purposes of science, literature, and the fine arts exclusively. Lord Denman thought that societies having for their object the advancement of religion, through the medium of literary publications, were not contemplated by the act referred to.

COURT OF COMMON COUNCIL.—At Thursday's sitting of the court, a motion was unanimously agreed to for the presentation of an address to his Majesty the King of the French, congratulating him upon his preservation from the attempt of assassination. Another motion, made on behalf of the Ragged Schools for a grant in aid of their funds, was referred to the finance committee. The court adjourned after adopting, by a considerable majority, a resolution for the presenting a petition to Parliament praying for a repeal of the game-laws.

WHAT WILL THE LORDS DO?—However, on the balance of probabilities, our impression is that the Lords are likely to consent to the second reading of the bill; after having done that, the general expectation among the best informed circles is that the provisions of the Bill will be altered in committee. These alterations, if the design to make them should be successful, may not be of a very extensive nature; and yet they may have power enough to break up the Administration, or to break up the Parliament by a dissolution. This is the best account we can give of the state of the question.—*Banker's Circular*.

STREET OBSTRUCTIONS.—When the meeting of the House of Commons was prevented on Monday week, only thirty-nine members, including the Speaker, being present at four o'clock,—the fortieth was on his way; but the blocking up of thoroughfares delayed his arrival. Dr. Bowring wrote thus to the *Times*—“It is high time that public attention should be called to the great and growing difficulties of communication between London and Westminster. I allowed myself yesterday three-quarters of an hour for reaching the House of Commons from the Bank. I entered an omnibus, as on the whole the least uncertain mode of conveyance, and reached Pudding Yard just as the clock had struck. The consequences of the absence of one member are but too well known.”

WHISTLEBLOWERS CONVERSIONS.—We have been credibly informed, that every resident Hertfordshire nobleman, except one, is prepared to support the Minister's free-trade measures in the House of Lords.—*Banker's Circular*.

FOREIGN INTELLIGENCE.

AMERICA.

By advices from New York to the 4th, and from Washington to the 2nd inst., we learn the Oregon discussion in the Senate was not yet terminated. On the 30th ult. the “compromise” policy was advocated with great ability by Messrs. Webster and Barrow. The navy estimates were produced. On the 31st, General Cass delivered a second speech, designed “to prepare the hearts of the people for war,” and in which he took especial care to dwell upon those topics which were calculated to excite national antipathies, and to exasperate the public mind of the two countries. On the 1st inst. Mr. Benton advocated a compromise on the 49th parallel. He successfully proved, that the treaty of Utrecht contemplated, intended, and, in fact, established the 49th parallel as the true boundary to the Pacific Ocean between the French and English colonies. Mr. Hannegan followed, and made a warm war-speech for 54 deg. 40 min., in the wake of General Cass. Should England now propose the 49th parallel as a basis, and re-open negotiations (says the correspondent of the *Chronicle*), it seems clear that the whole difficulties will be amicably adjusted. All persons agree that Colonel Benton has rendered essential and signal service to the lovers of “peace and good-will amongst men.”

An arrival at Charleston, via Savannah, from Vera Cruz, informs us that Mr. Slidell, the American Minister at Mexico, has been officially informed that the Government are ready to receive the propositions of the United States in relation to Texas; also, that Mr. Slidell had been received, and that Paredes and the people had become more favourable to an amicable arrangement with this country. The truth of this report is doubted.

FOREIGN MISCELLANY.

THE POLISH NUNS.—The *Journal des Débats* published a note, a few days since, presented by M. de Bouteiff to the Pontifical Government, and communicated to the representatives of the foreign powers at Rome, in which the Russian Government declares that a most minute and rigid inquiry had been instituted into the statements related by the Basilian abbess, Mieczislawska, and that the result proved them to be so many fables, invented for the purpose of promoting the insurrection in the provinces of ancient Poland. A rejoinder has since been published by the Count de Montalembert. Both documents necessarily consist chiefly of minute details, but they decidedly increase our conviction as to the truth of the main facts narrated by the abbess.

POLAND.—The *Augsburg Gazette* of the 21st instant announces that perfect tranquillity has been restored in Galicia. Zala, the leader of the insurgent peasants, had been compelled to fly, with only ten or twelve followers, to the forest of Neopoloniree.

THE JEWS IN RUSSIA.—A letter has been received from Sir Moses Montefiore, bearing date St. Petersburg, April 9, 1846, and stating that he has had the honour of a long audience with his imperial Majesty the Emperor, who received him most graciously, and most patiently listened to him; and his Majesty expressed his approbation of Sir Moses coming to St. Petersburg, and stated that he (Sir Moses) should have the satisfaction of taking with him the Emperor's assurance and the assurance of his ministers that he was most desirous of improving the condition of Sir Moses's co-religionists in the Russian empire; and that this object was at present under deliberation. His Majesty likewise suggested that Sir Moses should visit his co-religionists in the several towns in which they principally dwell. Sir Moses acknowledges in the warmest terms the Emperor's humanity and benevolence.

The tone taken by the London papers respecting the attempt of Lecomte to assassinate the King of the French appears to have given great satisfaction to our contemporaries on the other side of the channel.

ABD-EL-KADER ESCAPED AGAIN.—Letters received from Algiers state that Abd-el-Kader had once more outwitted the French generals. General Jousouf had been sent in pursuit of the Emir into the country of the Kabyles, and fondly imagined that he was at last about to overtake him, when he all of a sudden discovered that Abd-el-Kader was scouring the country behind him, having passed by night, with his whole army, within a few hundred yards of the French camp, without being discovered.

A CAKE RIOT.—There was a ridiculous riot at Aix-la-Chapelle on Easter Sunday. The bakers, who in previous years had distributed “paschal cakes” to their customers, combined, to the number of 113, and discontinued the custom. The people rose, crying aloud, “Our paschal cake!” and broke the bakers’ windows. The police being unable to put down the riot, the military were called out, and the people then quietly turned in. Next day, the authorities issued an order to the bakers, commanding them to distribute cakes as before.

A meeting of the English residents in Paris was held on Wednesday, for the purpose of drawing up an address of congratulation to his Majesty Louis Philippe, on his late providential escape. It was very numerously and respectfully attended.

THE AMERICAN NEGROES.—An important convention is about to assemble, to remodel the constitution of the state of New York. Formed in the infancy of the state, it has been found insufficient for the fast-growing emergencies of this large child of the confederacy. Most of the proposed changes are seized upon, of course, and used for political ammunition by the opposing parties. The point most hotly argued at this moment in the party papers is a proposal to give negroes the white man's vote of suffrage. On the face of the discussion it looks like a mere question of policy and philanthropy; but the real point of issue lies in the reason why the Whigs (Conservatives) advocate it, and the Democrats oppose it, viz., that the negro character is so invincibly aristocratic in its tastes, that they are sure to vote with the more respectable or Conservative party. It is estimated that, as the negro votes will number from fifteen to twenty thousand—as this is about the num-

ber of the Irish, who are as invincibly democratic, and have long been a favourable casting weight on the Democratic side—the Whigs rejoice in the prospect of black suffrage as a restitution of the “balance of power.”

—*Letter in the Morning Chronicle.*

SLAVERY IN AMERICA.

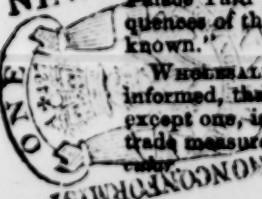
(From our Correspondent.)

New York, Feb. 28th, 1846.

The subject of the emancipation of a large portion of our fellow-creatures—our brethren—from the bonds of that “monstrous iniquity,” Slavery, has occupied the attention of mankind for many centuries; and particularly have the last three borne witness—from the time of Penn downwards, to the time of Wilberforce and Clarkson—that the holy cause of human liberty has been progressive, through the influence of religious enlightenment and the labours of its devoted advocates and friends. The United States form now the chief barrier against the total overthrow of this depraved system; the prospects and advancement, therefore, of the two conflicting parties in this country must be, and is, a source of much reflection and agitation to the friends of humanity everywhere existing. In the absence, therefore, of any subject of higher importance or interest, I will present your readers with some few facts which I have lately gathered concerning the operations of these two great bodies,—the friends and the enemies of the down-trodden and oppressed slave.

Of the twenty-eight States which at present form the great American Republic, fifteen, more than one-half, are what are denominated Slave States. Of these fifteen there are two, Maryland and Kentucky, in which the friends of liberty have obtained a slight footing to battle against their foes; and though the act of the legislature has driven them from the one, and a similar power is threatened against the other, yet sanguine hopes are entertained and encouraged, that ere long these two states, goaded by shame, or led on by the force of public opinion, will throw off the yoke of bondage and declare all their inhabitants ‘free and independent.’ In the Maryland legislature this winter, a Mr. Clagget, from Prince George’s county, a member of the Lower House, presented certain resolutions calling the attention of the Assembly to a recent number of the *Baltimore Saturday Visitor*, a weekly paper, edited by Dr. J. E. Snodgrass, in which was published the speech of Cassius M. Clay on Slavery, (delivered in New York), with editorial comments, and which Mr. Clagget was pleased to term a seditious publication; and requested that the Attorney-general of the State be directed to summon Dr. Snodgrass before the legislature to answer the charges made against him. The resolution passed the Lower House; whereupon Dr. Snodgrass presented a memorial to the General Assembly, representing the state of the case, and defending himself from the charges of Mr. Clagget, upon the principle of the liberty of the press. Upon this, a substitute for the resolutions first offered was introduced and adopted, directing the Attorney-general to prosecute any individual or individuals who may have violated the law against sedition and incendiary publications. Here the case at present rests, proceedings being about to be instituted against the editor of the *Saturday Vistor*, for violation of the law. The trial of the case is looked forward to with much interest and anxiety in the north; and as it will, no doubt, involve the question of where does the liberty of the press cease, the contest on the subject will be of great moment in determining the expectations of the Liberty, and the quaking fears of the Slavery, party. But, whatever may be the ultimate issue, the discussion must produce good. The Maryland press, jealous of its liberties, will, in general, take the field with Dr. Snodgrass, and the general agitation of the chief topic, slavery, will and must create a powerful anti-slavery party in the state, the effect of which is easily anticipated. Another bill, of a similar nature, has also been introduced into the Maryland Legislature this session, having for its object the repeal of a law enacted in 1831, which allows negroes to assemble, for purposes of religious worship, under the conduct and management of a “white licensed or ordained preacher;” and to declare all such assemblies “unlawful and tumultuous.” The second section of this bill provides, that the owner of the land on which any such meeting is held shall be fined 100 dollars for allowing it. The third section declares all meetings of negroes, for other than religious purposes, and all meetings for religious purposes other than those held in the regular place of worship, to be likewise “unlawful and tumultuous.” The bill has been referred to the Committee on Coloured Population, who have not yet reported. I need not say, that Mr. Clagget is among its warmest supporters.

I stated in my last, that a call had appeared in one of the religious papers, requiring a general meeting of the members and ministers of the Presbyterian Church, to discuss the subject of slavery in its connexion with the church as a term of communion. I learn that the meeting in question is to take place in May next, in Philadelphia, before the meeting of the (new school) General Assembly. The ground taken by the last (old school) General Assembly, and by the American Board of Foreign Missions, that “slavery is not a sin *per se*, at least in such a sense as necessarily to justify the exclusion of the slaveholder from the church,” is now the doctrine very generally held by the Conservative portion of the church; while others, ministers and laymen, refuse to submit to its practical operation. Under these circumstances, compromise is impossible: the parties each act from different and almost opposing principles, and a pacific adjustment of the question is almost impracticable. A meeting, of similar purpose to the above, is now being held in Boston: it commenced on the 26th inst. No reports of it having as yet reached New York, I shall be obliged to defer an account of its proceedings,



which I intended to give, till my next. The convention is composed of the ministers and church-members of all denominations throughout the state of Massachusetts.

Until the last week, I had never heard that it was a custom for slave dealers in the south to keep "bloodhounds" for the purpose of pursuing a "runaway" slave. Had any one told me of it, much as I have heard of the monstrous iniquities practised against the persecuted negro, I should not have given credit to the fact. The following advertisement, however, incredible as it may seem, establishes it beyond a doubt: it is cut from the *Sumter County (Alabama) Whig*:

"NEGRO DOGS.—The undersigned, having bought the entire pack of Negro Dogs (of the Hays and Allen stock), he now proposes to catch runaway Negroes. His charges will be Three Dollars per day for hunting, and Fifteen Dollars for catching a runaway. He resides three and a half miles north of Livingston, near the Lower Jones' Bluff-road.

WILLIAM GAMBREL.

Nov. 6th, 1845—6m."

The above rather disjointed and unconnected account will at least give your readers some idea of the present state of things in America, in regard to this important subject. The Liberty party in the north, despite the sometimes gloomy aspect of the horizon, are still struggling manfully on to victory and to conquest; every week brings us cheering intelligence of prejudices brought into subjection and interest overswayed by a sense of duty and right; and many of us anticipate, in prospective pleasure, that, before twenty years shall have elapsed, the death-knell of slavery will be rung in the last of the slave states. Then will the American republic be indeed "great, glorious, and free."

But all has not been done in the north yet which is required to place the negro citizen on an equal footing with the white. The present law of the state of New York provides that no negro who is not possessed of a property qualification (freehold) of 250 dollars shall be allowed to vote at the election of officers for the state or Union. In the proposed convention for the revision and amendment of the constitution of the state, to be held in April next, the Liberty party in the state have taken measures to provide that this law be rescinded, and that the right of universal suffrage be allowed to the black as well as to the white. Such is the progress of the Anti-slavery party. Who would believe that, twenty-five years ago, New York in this respect was numbered among the "slave states of America"?

POSTSCRIPT.

PARLIAMENTARY INTELLIGENCE.

In the House of Commons last night, the principal portion of the evening was occupied with the case of Mr. Smith O'Brien, who refused to sit upon a railway committee. He was last night formally reported to the House as having neglected to attend. The Speaker called upon the honourable member, but Mr. O'Brien, having already stated his views in the letters which he had addressed to the chairman of the Committee of Selection, had nothing further to say. Mr. Estcourt, the chairman of the committee, having given a brief narration of the facts of the case, concluded by moving, as he repeated, with great pain, that W. S. O'Brien, Esq., having disobeyed the order of the House by refusing to attend the committee on which he was summoned, had been guilty of a contempt of the House.

Mr. O'CONNELL, in a long argument, contended that the House had not the power to enforce attendance. There was a statutory power to compel the attendance of hon. members upon the House, but no such power to compel their attendance on committees. Mr. S. O'Brien had been guilty of nothing but a breach of an order of a secondary jurisdiction arising out of another jurisdiction recently created by the House. There was nothing but courtesy in the terms of his letters, and no wish to contemn the authority of the House.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL combated these views. The House could not allow its authority to be defied in this manner, and must vindicate it, even though it were compelled to resort to those extreme measures against Mr. S. O'Brien which must follow the resolution then before it. The orders of the House must be obligatory on all its members, for if they were not there must be a stop to all public business, and to all its utility as a representative assembly.

Mr. WARBURTON moved as an amendment that Mr. S. O'Brien, having stated special grounds on which he wished to be exempted from attending on private committees, should in future be exempted from such attendance, and that it be an instruction to the Committee of Selection to report to the House the names of all members in future claiming to be exempt from such attendance, and the grounds on which they claimed such exemption.

Mr. J. O'CONNELL shared the opinions of Mr. S. O'BRIEN on this subject; but he had not taken the same course, because he thought that he had a higher duty to pursue in opposing the Coercion Bill.

Mr. BROTHERTON, Sir G. GREY, Mr. HUME, and other Liberal members, censured Mr. O'Brien for the contempt of the House. Sir R. PEEL and Sir T. WILDE spoke on the same side. The latter speaker declared that the power of the House over Irish members was as complete as the interests of Ireland required that it should be, and as parliamentary law could render it. The House ought not to shrink from asserting its authority in a case where it had been so flagrantly denied. In voting for this motion he did not shut his eyes to the measures which must follow it; but he would not, on that account, abandon the powers of Parliament, which were a trust for the benefit of the public, and ought not to be betrayed.

After some further observations, the amendment was rejected by 139 to 15. The original resolution was then put, and carried by 133 to 13.

Mr. ESTCOURT then moved that Mr. O'Brien be committed to the custody of the Serjeant-at-arms. Several

members, however, pleaded for delay, Mr. O'CONNELL among the rest. He thought it possible that, if this motion were suspended, Mr. S. O'Brien might come to a different conclusion on this subject.

Eventually Sir R. PEEL, with general concurrence, moved the adjournment of the debate to Thursday, in order to give time to Mr. O'Brien to change his opinion.

Mr. ROCHE, however, stated that he was empowered by Mr. O'Brien to make known to the House, that he was so strongly convinced of the rectitude of the course which he had pursued, that he felt it unnecessary that any delay should be interposed between the resolution of the House, which had been just passed, and that which he knew must follow it.

Sir R. PEEL recommended the House to take its own course, and not to be precluded from it by the communication which it had just received.

After some further conversation the debate was adjourned to the time of private business on Thursday next.

In the course of the evening Mr. S. O'BRIEN again came into the House, and seated himself on the front benches of the Opposition. As soon as the SPEAKER observed him in his place, he informed him of the resolution of the House, and requested him to withdraw. Mr. S. O'BRIEN rose, bowed to the authority of the Speaker, and immediately withdrew.

Mr. P. SCROPE then moved for leave to bring in a bill for promoting the reclamation of waste lands in Ireland. Mr. CRAWFORD seconded the motion. Sir J. GRAHAM declared that he would not refuse his assent to the introduction of the measure. He must, however, reserve his opinion as to its details. The bill was then read a first time.

Mr. HUDSON obtained leave to bring in a bill for enabling or facilitating the winding up of the affairs of joint-stock companies for making railways, which had been formed subsequent to the commencement of the last session of Parliament, and for which acts of incorporation should not be obtained during the present session.

Mr. ROMILLY last night took his seat for Bridport, in the room of Mr. COCHRANE, without comment; Mr. BANKES not thinking fit to make his threatened motion.

PUNISHMENT OF DEATH.—MR. EWART gave notice that, on Tuesday, the 12th of May, he should renew his motion for the abolition of the punishment of death.

In the House of Lords last night several very comprehensive returns respecting railways were consented to, on the motion of Earl FITZWILLIAM and Lord MONTAGUE. The Earl of DALHOUSIE defended the Board of Trade for the method pursued by it with reference to railways; and afterwards moved the second reading of the Railway Companies' Dissolution Bill, which was agreed to without opposition.—In the course of the evening the LORD CHANCELLOR read two messages from her Majesty respecting a proposed reward to Viscount Hardinge and Lord Gough for their services in India.—The Railway Dissolution Bill was read a second time, and ordered to be committed on Thursday next.

PORTUGAL.—An insurrectionary movement has broken out in the north of Portugal, and the whole country has been placed under martial law. The province of Minho has been the scene of agrarian outrages, arising from the attempt to put in force the new system of taxation by repartition, and to levy imposts in the agricultural districts, under the new bill of health, particularly burdensome and oppressive. The movement is entirely destitute of a general political character. The number of the people in a state of actual insurrection is between 3,000 and 4,000, armed very imperfectly, but exhibiting unusual courage. The movement is entirely confined to the northern frontier, and limited to the district of Braga, with the exception of a portion of Viana, and has no support whatever in the remaining parts of the kingdom. The Constitution was suspended on the 20th inst. for a term of twenty days, the press suppressed, military tribunals created for the trial of all offences against the state, and summary proceedings were to be instituted after the fashion of those in Spain.

FRANCE.—On Saturday the King of the French received the address of congratulation on his late escape, voted to him by the English residents at Paris, and signed by more than five hundred persons. It was presented by the Duke of Montrose. His Majesty said that he was deeply sensible of the kind sympathy which was expressed by the British residents at Paris, and that the warmth of his feelings on this occasion prevented him from giving that utterance to them which he could have desired. He added that the hospitality exercised towards him in England could never be effaced from his heart and memory. The Queen then appeared, and the deputation were presented to her by the King individually. She then addressed them, expressing, in the most feeling manner, the high gratification that she derived from the cordial sentiments contained in the address. Lord and Lady PALMERSTON were to leave Paris for London on Tuesday morning. Our correspondent (says the *Times*) mentions circumstances connected with the late attempt at assassination which would suggest that the criminal is insane.

PEACE WITH AMERICA.—The citizens of Edinburgh have adopted an address to the citizens of Washington, deprecating war and recommending the settlement of national disputes by arbitration. It has already been signed by upwards of fifty gentlemen, including the Lord Provost, Magistrates, and Town Councillors, the Master of the Merchant Company, Dr. Chalmers, and eleven of the city clergymen.

THE SOCIETY FOR THE PROPAGATION OF THE GOSPEL held its annual meeting yesterday at the Hanover Square Rooms, "which," says the reporter, "was crowded with the élite of the rank, beauty, and fashion of the ancient city of Westminster." The Duke of Buccleuch, as High Steward of Westminster, presided. From the statements made at the meeting, it would seem that the Society is not in a very flourishing condition. Lord Robert Grosvenor stated the fact that £31,000 had to be sold out of the capital stock recently to supply the pressing exigencies of the society. The principal speakers were the Bishops of Winchester, St. David's, and

Jamaica, Lord Glenelg, Geo. Byng, Esq., M.P., the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Lord John Manners, M.P., and Lord Sandon, M.P. The speech of the Chancellor of the Exchequer was remarkable as a sign of the times. A little more teaching, reflection, and pressure from without may, perhaps, help to make Mr. Goulburn a thorough voluntary. He is thus reported to have addressed the meeting:

The right honourable gentleman proceeded to combat the notion, that it was the duty of the Legislature, as such, to undertake the evangelisation of distant countries. He admitted responsibility, but such as referred to the tenor of their legislation in carrying onward and sanctioning religious truth, rather than by voting grants of the public money for purposes for the furtherance of which it was better to encourage such societies as that with which they were now connected. It had been exceedingly difficult to obtain grants for objects about which different views were entertained; and it often happened, that the attempt to enforce obnoxious payments went far to destroy the essentials of religion, engendering strife and enmity with those they were most anxious to bring into the fold of their common Christianity. The benefits derived from political advantages were of short endurance, and apt to fade away; but the ties of Christianity connected them in a still closer bond [hear, hear].

The Bishop of Jamaica regretted that the wisdom of the legislature had thought proper to withdraw from the society the poor pittance which it had received. It was quite clear that the hour had arrived when the church must exert itself for its own perpetuity [cheers]. Vigorous efforts to raise subscriptions were resolved on.

SLAVERY AND THE FREE CHURCH.—A public meeting of the members and friends of the Glasgow Emancipation Society was held in the City-hall, on Tuesday evening, for the purpose of passing a memorial to the General Assembly of the Free Church, imploring them to renounce Christian fellowship with American slaveholders, and to send back the money. The meeting was a very large and influential one; and, on the motion of Mr. Watson, Councillor Turner was called to the chair. The meeting was addressed by Messrs. Henry C. Wright, Frederick Douglass, James M. Buffum, and George Thompson, in long and eloquent speeches, which were listened to with the most profound attention; and resolutions were adopted by acclamation in favour of the object of the meeting. A Mr. James Pinkerton and another individual defended the conduct of the Free Church, but the feeling of the meeting was entirely against them.—*Glasgow Argus*.

SECESSION FROM THE SCOTCH EPISCOPAL CHURCH.—Mr. J. H. Crowder, the incumbent of St. James's Episcopal Chapel, Edinburgh, gave notice to his congregation from the pulpit on Sunday last, that he had resigned the pastoral charge of that chapel, and that he was about to withdraw from the communion of the Scottish Episcopal Church, and to identify himself with those who had lately seceded from it.—*Scotsman*.

At the weekly meeting of the Repeal Association on Monday, the amount of rent was only £70. The attendance was very meagre.

MORE EVICTIONS IN GALWAY.—The *Galway Vindicator* states that there were twenty-three cases of evictions disposed of at Oughterard sessions on Friday last.

LORD LINCOLN A CANDIDATE AGAIN.—The noble secretary for Ireland has come forward for the Falkirk district of burghs, in the room of Mr. Baird, who has resigned. The arrangement appears to have been made in London, without the knowledge of the constituency. It happens, however, that a majority of the electors were already pledged to support Mr. Wilson, of Dundee, a free-trader, whenever a vacancy should occur. A meeting was held at Falkirk, a few days ago, when it was determined, with Mr. Wilson's consent, to support Lord Lincoln, provided he would pledge himself in the event of a general election to leave the field open to Mr. Wilson. The noble lord has, however, refused to give the pledge, on the ground that it would be unconstitutional; the free-trade electors have consequently determined to have their own candidate. A contest will probably be the result, which will, in all likelihood, leave the noble secretary for Ireland to rejoin his fellow-secretary for the colonies in his search for an inlet to the House of Commons.

THE COURT OF COMMON PLEAS have decided (Mr. Justice Maule dissenting) that notices of objection against the name of a person being retained on the list of voters for a borough, which notices were signed by him as objector, with the addition of the true place of abode, but being another and different place from that inserted against his name on the list of voters, are sufficient.

At the dinner given by the Lord Mayor to the Ministers, on Wednesday, Sir R. Peel, in an eloquent speech, proposed the health of King Louis Philippe, which was drunk with the utmost enthusiasm.

THE ANTI-CORN-LAW LEAGUE (says the *Devonshire Chronicle*), have forwarded to the distressed agricultural labourers of Torrington and the neighbouring parishes, a quantity of beds and bedding.

BIBLE MOVEMENT.—Ten thousand copies of the sacred Scriptures have, within the last three months, been put into circulation by the congregation connected with Bridge-street chapel.—*Bristol Mercury*.

BRIDPORT ELECTION COMMITTEE.—The committee met on Saturday, and resolved—that Mr. Cochrane was not duly elected, and that Mr. Romilly was duly elected, and ought to be returned; and that they would report to the House that the manner in which Mr. Cochrane was returned was by the transfer of Rocket's vote. The whole proceedings did not occupy much more than half an hour.

CORN MARKET. MARK LANE. THIS DAY.

	Wheat	Barley	Oats	Beans	Peas	Flour
English	2220	940	1810			
Scotch.....						
Irish				2320		
Foreign	730					

English wheat firm, at a trifling improvement on last week.

In the discharge of my public duty, I have done no more than the electors of Finsbury sent me to Parliament to do. In the discharge of that duty I have certainly had to come in contact with the spirit of ecclesiastical tyranny. Poor John Thorogood, as you may probably remember, suffered eighteen months' imprisonment in Chelmsford gaol, for the conscientious non-payment of 4s. 6d.; and he would have remained there till now, had Providence spared his life so long, so far as the Church authorities were concerned, if I had not induced Parliament to purge him of the crime of contempt of the ecclesiastical courts [cheers]. On other occasions I have been too, as my friend has said, in "miserable minorities;" but I have been sustained and encouraged by knowing, that I was supported by a large majority—an enlightened majority—of the people [cheers]. I have been much pleased with the sentiments expressed by some of the speakers to-night. I could have wished that Baron Parke, and the jury whom he charged, had been here. I could wish that these sentiments were uttered in the House of Commons, and that some of the gentlemen who have addressed you to-night were with me there [laughter and cheers]. Reference has been made to an ultimate intention of bringing forward this matter in the House of Commons. It would be of no use to make it a subject of conversation there; Dissenters would only be abused much as they have been by Gatheroole [a laugh]. The only way, it appears to me, is to propose an alteration of the law of libel. I shall be very happy to give any such measure my warmest support, confident, that in so doing, I should only represent the opinions and feelings of the most enlightened portion of the community at large [great cheering].

Several names were announced as subscribers to the fund, among which was that of Mr. Duncombe, to the amount of £5. From a letter of Mr. Miall's, which was read to the meeting, it appeared that the expenses of the first trial would be about £600; it would cost about £200 more to go into a higher court; and, in the event of being cast in, a second trial, should one be obtained, about £700 or £800 additional expense might be incurred.

MR. VINCENT'S LECTURES.—DUNSTABLE, BEDS.—Mr. Henry Vincent has visited this small town, and has received a most enthusiastic reception from all classes of the inhabitants. He addressed two meetings in the large Temperance-hall, which was crowded to overflowing—the first, On Civil and Religious Liberty; and the second, On the Mental and Moral Elevation of the People. Preparations are being made for three more meetings on complete suffrage and other kindred questions.—LUTON, BEDS.—Mr. Henry Vincent has opened the Mechanics' Institution in this town by two public addresses on the social, moral, and mental elevation of the people. The largest hall in the town was secured, and the tickets were sold at 1s. 6d. for each lecture. The hall was crowded—such meetings were never held in Luton. Mr. Little, Episcopalian minister, occupied the chair. Mr. Vincent's addresses were welcomed with enthusiastic cheering. The result of the meetings, in a pecuniary point of view, was most satisfactory. The committee has been able to vote £20 for the purchase of books. Mr. Vincent has since addressed two large meetings on the temperance question, and next week lectures on civil and religious liberty and complete suffrage; after which a large *soirée* is to be given to him by the friends of liberty, education, and temperance generally. Mr. Vincent has also lectured at Baldock on the subject of education.

THE RELIGIOUS TRACT SOCIETY.—In the Court of Queen's Bench, on Wednesday last, it was decided by the judges that the above society was liable to poor-rates, notwithstanding its having obtained from Mr. Tidd Pratt a certificate, stating that it was a society formed for the purposes of science, literature, and the fine arts exclusively. Lord Denman thought that societies having for their object the advancement of religion, through the medium of literary publications, were not contemplated by the act referred to.

COURT OF COMMON COUNCIL.—At Thursday's sitting of the court, a motion was unanimously agreed to for the presentation of an address to his Majesty the King of the French, congratulating him upon his preservation from the attempt of assassination. Another motion, made on behalf of the Ragged Schools for a grant in aid of their funds, was referred to the finance committee. The court adjourned after adopting, by a considerable majority, a resolution for the presenting a petition to Parliament praying for a repeal of the game-laws.

WHAT WILL THE LORDS DO?—However, on the balance of probabilities, our impression is that the Lords are likely to consent to the second reading of the bill; after having done that, the general expectation among the best informed circles is that the provisions of the Bill will be altered in committee. These alterations, if the design to make them should be successful, may not be of a very extensive nature; and yet they may have power enough to break up the Administration, or to break up the Parliament by a dissolution. This is the best account we can give of the state of the question.—*Banker's Circular*.

STREET OBSTRUCTIONS.—When the meeting of the House of Commons was prevented on Monday week,—only thirty-nine members, including the Speaker, being present at four o'clock,—the fortieth was on his way; but the blocking up of thoroughfares delayed his arrival. Dr. Bowring wrote thus to the *Times*—“It is high time that public attention should be called to the great and growing difficulties of communication between London and Westminster. I allowed myself yesterday three-quarters of an hour for reaching the House of Commons from the Bank. I entered an omnibus, as on the whole the most uncertain mode of conveyance, and reached Palace Yard just as the clock had struck. The consequences of the absence of one member are but too well known.”

WHOLESALE CONVERSIONS.—We have been credibly informed, that every resident Hertfordshire nobleman, except one, is prepared to support the Minister's free-trade measures in the House of Lords.—*Banker's Circular*.

FOREIGN INTELLIGENCE.

AMERICA.

By advices from New York to the 4th, and from Washington to the 2nd inst., we learn the Oregon discussion in the Senate was not yet terminated. On the 30th ult. the “compromise” policy was advocated with great ability by Messrs. Webster and Barrow. The navy estimates were produced. On the 31st, General Cass delivered a second speech, designed “to prepare the hearts of the people for war,” and in which he took especial care to dwell upon those topics which were calculated to excite national antipathies, and to exasperate the public mind of the two countries. On the 1st inst. Mr. Benton advocated a compromise on the 49th parallel. He successfully proved, that the treaty of Utrecht contemplated, intended, and, in fact, established the 49th parallel as the true boundary to the Pacific Ocean between the French and English colonies. Mr. Hannegan followed, and made a warm war-speech for 54 deg. 40 min., in the wake of General Cass. Should England now propose the 49th parallel as a basis, and re-open negotiations (says the correspondent of the *Chronicle*), it seems clear that the whole difficulties will be amicably adjusted. All persons agree that Colonel Benton has rendered essential and signal service to the lovers of “peace and good-will amongst men.”

An arrival at Charleston, via Savannah, from Vera Cruz, informs us that Mr. Slidell, the American Minister at Mexico, has been officially informed that the Government are ready to receive the propositions of the United States in relation to Texas; also, that Mr. Slidell had been received, and that Paredes and the people had become more favourable to an amicable arrangement with this country. The truth of this report is doubted.

FOREIGN MISCELLANY.

THE POLISH NUNS.—The *Journal des Débats* published a note, a few days since, presented by M. de Bouteiff to the Pontifical Government, and communicated to the representatives of the foreign powers at Rome, in which the Russian Government declares that a most minute and rigid inquiry had been instituted into the statements related by the Basilian abbess, Mieczislawska, and that the results proved them to be so many fables, invented for the purpose of promoting the insurrection in the provinces of ancient Poland. A rejoinder has since been published by the Count de Montalembert. Both documents necessarily consist chiefly of minute details, but they decidedly increase our conviction as to the truth of the main facts narrated by the abbess.

POLAND.—The *Augsburg Gazette* of the 21st instant announces that perfect tranquillity has been restored in Galicia. Zala, the leader of the insurgent peasants, had been compelled to fly, with only ten or twelve followers, to the forest of Neopoloniree.

THE JEWS IN RUSSIA.—A letter has been received from Sir Moses Montefiore, bearing date St. Petersburg, April 9, 1846, and stating that he has had the honour of a long audience with his imperial Majesty the Emperor, who received him most graciously, and most patiently listened to him; and his Majesty expressed his approbation of Sir Moses coming to St. Petersburg, and stated that he (Sir Moses) should have the satisfaction of taking with him the Emperor's assurance and the assurance of his ministers that he was most desirous of improving the condition of Sir Moses's co-religionists in the Russian empire; and that this object was at present under deliberation. His Majesty likewise suggested that Sir Moses should visit his co-religionists in the several towns in which they principally dwell. Sir Moses acknowledges in the warmest terms the Emperor's humanity and benevolence.

The tone taken by the London papers respecting the attempt of Lecomte to assassinate the King of the French appears to have given great satisfaction to our contemporaries on the other side of the channel.

ABD-EL-KADER ESCAPED AGAIN.—Letters received from Algiers state that Abd-el-Kader had once more outwitted the French generals. General Jousouf had been sent in pursuit of the Emir into the country of the Kabyles, and fondly imagined that he was at last about to overtake him, when he all of a sudden discovered that Abd-el-Kader was scouring the country behind him, having passed by night, with his whole army, within a few hundred yards of the French camp, without being discovered.

A CAKE RIOT.—There was a ridiculous riot at Aix-la-Chapelle on Easter Sunday. The bakers, who in previous years had distributed “paschal cakes” to their customers, combined, to the number of 113, and discontinued the custom. The people rose, crying aloud, “Our paschal cake!” and broke the bakers’ windows. The police being unable to put down the riot, the military were called out, and the people then quietly turned in. Next day, the authorities issued an order to the bakers, commanding them to distribute cakes as before.

A meeting of the English residents in Paris was held on Wednesday, for the purpose of drawing up an address of congratulation to his Majesty Louis Philippe, on his late providential escape. It was very numerously and respectfully attended.

THE AMERICAN NEGROES.—An important convention is about to assemble, to remodel the constitution of the state of New York. Formed in the infancy of the state, it has been found insufficient for the fast-growing emergencies of this large child of the confederacy. Most of the proposed changes are seized upon, of course, and used for political ammunition by the opposing parties. The point most hotly argued at this moment in the party papers is a proposition to give negroes the white man's vote of suffrage. On the face of the discussion it looks like a mere question of policy and philanthropy; but the real point of issue lies in the reason why the Whigs (Conservatives) advocate it, and the Democrats oppose it, viz., that the negro character is so invincibly aristocratic in its tastes, that they are sure to vote with the more respectable or Conservative party. It is estimated that, as the negro votes will number from fifteen to twenty thousand—as this is about the num-

ber of the Irish, who are as invincibly democratic, and have long been a favourable casting weight on the Democratic side—the Whigs rejoice in the prospect of black suffrage as a restitution of the “balance of power.”

—*Letter in the Morning Chronicle.*

SLAVERY IN AMERICA.

(From our Correspondent.)

New York, Feb. 28th, 1846.

The subject of the emancipation of a large portion of our fellow-creatures—our brethren—from the bonds of that “monstrous iniquity,” Slavery, has occupied the attention of mankind for many centuries; and particularly have the last three borne witness—from the time of Penn downwards, to the time of Wilberforce and Clarkson—that the holy cause of human liberty has been progressive, through the influence of religious enlightenment and the labours of its devoted advocates and friends. The United States form now the chief barrier against the total overthrow of this depraved system; the prospects and advancement, therefore, of the two conflicting parties in this country must be, and is, a source of much reflection and agitation to the friends of humanity everywhere existing. In the absence, therefore, of any subject of higher importance or interest, I will present your readers with some few facts which I have lately gathered concerning the operations of these two great bodies,—the friends and the enemies of the down-trodden and oppressed slave.

Of the twenty-eight States which at present form the great American Republic, fifteen, more than one-half, are what are denominated Slave States. Of these fifteen there are two, Maryland and Kentucky, in which the friends of liberty have obtained a slight footing to battle against their foes; and though the act of the legislature has driven them from the one, and a similar power is threatened against the other, yet sanguine hopes are entertained and encouraged, that ere long these two states, goaded by shame, or led on by the force of public opinion, will throw off the yoke of bondage and declare all their inhabitants ‘free and independent.’ In the Maryland legislature this winter, a Mr. Clagget, from Prince George’s county, a member of the Lower House, presented certain resolutions calling the attention of the Assembly to a recent number of the *Baltimore Saturday Visitor*, a weekly paper, edited by Dr. J. E. Snodgrass, in which was published the speech of Cassius M. Clay on Slavery, (delivered in New York), with editorial comments, and which Mr. Clagget was pleased to term a seditious publication; and requested that the Attorney-general of the State be directed to summon Dr. Snodgrass before the legislature to answer the charges made against him. The resolution passed the Lower House; whereupon Dr. Snodgrass presented a memorial to the General Assembly, representing the state of the case, and defending himself from the charges of Mr. Clagget, upon the principle of the liberty of the press. Upon this, a substitute for the resolutions first offered was introduced and adopted, directing the Attorney-general to prosecute any individual or individuals who may have violated the law against seditious and incendiary publications. Here the case at present rests, proceedings being about to be instituted against the editor of the *Saturday Vistor*, for violation of the law. The trial of the case is looked forward to with much interest and anxiety in the north; and as it will, no doubt, involve the question of where does the liberty of the press cease, the contest on the subject will be of great moment in determining the expectations of the Liberty, and the quaking fears of the Slavery, party. But, whatever may be the ultimate issue, the discussion must produce good. The Maryland press, jealous of its liberties, will, in general, take the field with Dr. Snodgrass, and the general agitation of the chief topic, slavery, will and must create a powerful anti-slavery party in the state, the effect of which is easily anticipated. Another bill, of a similar nature, has also been introduced into the Maryland Legislature this session, having for its object the repeal of a law enacted in 1831, which allows negroes to assemble, for purposes of religious worship, under the conduct and management of a “white licensed or ordained preacher;” and to declare all such assemblies “unlawful and tumultuous.” The second section of this bill provides, that the owner of the land on which any such meeting is held shall be fined 100 dollars for allowing it. The third section declares all meetings of negroes, for other than religious purposes, and all meetings for religious purposes other than those held in the regular place of worship, to be likewise “unlawful and tumultuous.” The bill has been referred to the Committee on Coloured Population, who have not yet reported. I need not say, that Mr. Clagget is among its warmest supporters.

I stated in my last, that a call had appeared in one of the religious papers, requiring a general meeting of the members and ministers of the Presbyterian Church, to discuss the subject of slavery in its connexion with the church as a term of communion. I learn that the meeting in question is to take place in May next, in Philadelphia, before the meeting of the (new school) General Assembly. The ground taken by the last (old school) General Assembly, and by the American Board of Foreign Missions, that “slavery is not a sin *per se*, at least in such a sense as necessarily to justify the exclusion of the slaveholder from the church,” is now the doctrine very generally held by the Conservative portion of the church; while others, ministers and laymen, refuse to submit to its practical operation. Under these circumstances, compromise is impossible: the parties each act from different and almost opposing principles, and a pacific adjustment of the question is almost impracticable. A meeting, of similar purpose to the above, is now being held in Boston: it commenced on the 26th inst. No reports of it having as yet reached New York, I shall be obliged to defer an account of its proceedings,

which I intended to give, till my next. The convention is composed of the ministers and church-members of all denominations throughout the state of Massachusetts.

Until the last week, I had never heard that it was a custom for slave dealers in the south to keep "bloodhounds" for the purpose of pursuing a "runaway" slave. Had any one told me of it, much as I have heard of the monstrous iniquities practised against the persecuted negro, I should not have given credit to the fact. The following advertisement, however, incredible as it may seem, establishes it beyond a doubt: it is cut from the *Sumter County (Alabama) Whig*:

"NEGRO DOGS.—The undersigned, having bought the entire pack of Negro Dogs (of the Hays and Allen stock), he now proposes to catch runaway Negroes. His charges will be Three Dollars per day for hunting, and Fifteen Dollars for catching a runaway. He resides three and a half miles north of Livingston, near the Lower Jones' Bluff-road.

WILLIAM GAMBREL.

"Nov. 6th, 1845—6m."

The above rather disjointed and unconnected account will at least give your readers some idea of the present state of things in America, in regard to this important subject. The Liberty party in the north, despite the sometimes gloomy aspect of the horizon, are still struggling manfully on to victory and to conquest; every week brings us cheering intelligence of prejudices brought into subjection and interest overswayed by a sense of duty and right; and many of us anticipate, in prospective pleasure, that, before twenty years shall have elapsed, the death-knell of slavery will be rung in the last of the slave states. Then will the American republic be indeed "great, glorious, and free."

But all has not been done in the north yet which is required to place the negro citizen on an equal footing with the white. The present law of the state of New York provides that no negro who is not possessed of a property qualification (freehold) of 250 dollars shall be allowed to vote at the election of officers for the state or Union. In the proposed convention for the revision and amendment of the constitution of the state, to be held in April next, the Liberty party in the state have taken measures to provide that this law be rescinded, and that the right of universal suffrage be allowed to the black as well as to the white. Such is the progress of the Anti-slavery party. Who would believe that, twenty-five years ago, New York in this respect was numbered among the "slave states of America"?

POSTSCRIPT.

PARLIAMENTARY INTELLIGENCE.

In the House of Commons last night, the principal portion of the evening was occupied with the case of Mr. Smith O'Brien, who refused to sit upon a railway committee. He was last night formally reported to the House as having neglected to attend. The Speaker called upon the honourable member, but Mr. O'Brien, having already stated his views in the letters which he had addressed to the chairman of the Committee of Selection, had nothing further to say. Mr. Estcourt, the chairman of the committee, having given a brief narration of the facts of the case, concluded by moving, as he repeated, with great pain, that W. S. O'Brien, Esq., having disobeyed the order of the House by refusing to attend the committee on which he was summoned, had been guilty of a contempt of the House.

Mr. O'CONNELL, in a long argument, contended that the House had not the power to enforce attendance. There was a statutable power to compel the attendance of hon. members upon the House, but no such power to compel their attendance on committees. Mr. S. O'Brien had been guilty of nothing but a breach of an order of a secondary jurisdiction arising out of another jurisdiction recently created by the House. There was nothing but courtesy in the terms of his letters, and no wish to condemn the authority of the House.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL combated these views. The House could not allow its authority to be defied in this manner, and must vindicate it, even though it were compelled to resort to those extreme measures against Mr. S. O'Brien which must follow the resolution then before it. The orders of the House must be obligatory on all its members, for if they were not there must be a stop to all public business, and to all its utility as a representative assembly.

Mr. WARBURTON moved as an amendment that Mr. S. O'Brien, having stated special grounds on which he wished to be exempted from attending on private committees, should in future be exempted from such attendance, and that it be an instruction to the Committee of Selection to report to the House the names of all members in future claiming to be exempt from such attendance, and the grounds on which they claimed such exemption.

Mr. J. O'CONNELL shared the opinions of Mr. S. O'Brien on this subject; but he had not taken the same course, because he thought that he had a higher duty to pursue in opposing the Coercion Bill.

Mr. BROTHERTON, Sir G. GREY, Mr. HUME, and other Liberal members, censured Mr. O'Brien for the contempt of the House. Sir R. PEEL and Sir T. WILDE spoke on the same side. The latter speaker declared that the power of the House over Irish members was as complete as the interests of Ireland required that it should be, and as parliamentary law could render it. The House ought not to shrink from asserting its authority in a case where it had been so flagrantly denied. In voting for this motion he did not shut his eyes to the measures which must follow it; but he would not, on that account, abandon the powers of Parliament, which were a trust for the benefit of the public, and ought not to be betrayed.

After some further observations, the amendment was rejected by 139 to 15. The original resolution was then put, and carried by 133 to 13.

Mr. ESTCOURT then moved that Mr. O'Brien be committed to the custody of the Serjeant-at-arms. Several

members, however, pleaded for delay, Mr. O'CONNELL among the rest. He thought it possible that, if this motion were suspended, Mr. S. O'Brien might come to a different conclusion on this subject.

Eventually Sir R. PEEL, with general concurrence, moved the adjournment of the debate to Thursday, in order to give time to Mr. O'Brien to change his opinion.

Mr. ROCHE, however, stated that he was empowered by Mr. O'Brien to make known to the House, that he was so strongly convinced of the rectitude of the course which he had pursued, that he felt it unnecessary that any delay should be interposed between the resolution of the House, which had been just passed, and that which he knew must follow it.

Sir R. PEEL recommended the House to take its own course, and not to be precluded from it by the communication which it had just received.

After some further conversation the debate was adjourned to the time of private business on Thursday next.

In the course of the evening Mr. S. O'BRIEN again came into the House, and seated himself on the front benches of the Opposition. As soon as the SPEAKER observed him in his place, he informed him of the resolution of the House, and requested him to withdraw. Mr. S. O'BRIEN rose, bowed to the authority of the Speaker, and immediately withdrew.

Mr. SCROPE then moved for leave to bring in a bill for promoting the reclamation of waste lands in Ireland. Mr. CRAWFORD seconded the motion. Sir J. GRAHAM declared that he would not refuse his assent to the introduction of the measure. He must, however, reserve his opinion as to its details. The bill was then read a first time.

Mr. HUDSON obtained leave to bring in a bill for enabling or facilitating the winding up of the affairs of joint-stock companies for making railways, which had been formed subsequent to the commencement of the last session of Parliament, and for which acts of incorporation should not be obtained during the present session.

Mr. ROMILLY last night took his seat for Bridport, in the room of Mr. COCHRANE, without comment; Mr. BANKS not thinking fit to make his threatened motion.

PUNISHMENT OF DEATH.—Mr. EWART gave notice that, on Tuesday, the 12th of May, he should renew his motion for the abolition of the punishment of death.

In the House of Lords last night several very comprehensive returns respecting railways were consented to, on the motion of Earl FITZWILLIAM and Lord MONT-EAGLE. The Earl of DALHOUSIE defended the Board of Trade for the method pursued by it with reference to railways; and afterwards moved the second reading of the Railway Companies' Dissolution Bill, which was agreed to without opposition.—In the course of the evening the LORD CHANCELLOR read two messages from her Majesty respecting a proposed reward to Viscount Hardinge and Lord Gough for their services in India.—The Railway Dissolutions Bill was read a second time, and ordered to be committed on Thursday next.

PORTUGAL.—An insurrectionary movement has broken out in the north of Portugal, and the whole country has been placed under martial law. The province of Minho has been the scene of agrarian outrages, arising from the attempt to put in force the new system of taxation by repartition, and to levy imposts in the agricultural districts, under the new bill of health, particularly burdensome and oppressive. The movement is entirely destitute of a general political character. The number of the people in a state of actual insurrection is between 3,000 and 4,000, armed very imperfectly, but exhibiting unusual courage. The movement is entirely confined to the northern frontier, and limited to the district of Braga, with the exception of a portion of Viana, and has no support whatever in the remaining parts of the kingdom. The Constitution was suspended on the 20th inst. for a term of twenty days, the press suppressed, military tribunals created for the trial of all offences against the state, and summary proceedings were to be instituted after the fashion of those in Spain.

FRANCE.—On Saturday the King of the French received the address of congratulation on his late escape, voted to him by the English residents at Paris, and signed by more than five hundred persons. It was presented by the Duke of Montrose. His Majesty said that he was deeply sensible of the kind sympathy which was expressed by the British residents at Paris, and that the warmth of his feelings on this occasion prevented him from giving that utterance to them which he could have desired. He added that the hospitality exercised towards him in England could never be effaced from his heart and memory. The Queen then appeared, and the deputation were presented to her by the King individually. She then addressed them, expressing, in the most feeling manner, the high gratification that she derived from the cordial sentiments contained in the address. Lord and Lady PALMERSTON were to leave Paris for London on Tuesday morning. Our correspondent (says the *Times*) mentions circumstances connected with the late attempt at assassination which would suggest that the criminal is insane.

PEACE WITH AMERICA.—The citizens of Edinburgh have adopted an address to the citizens of Washington, deprecating war and recommending the settlement of national disputes by arbitration. It has already been signed by upwards of fifty gentlemen, including the Lord Provost, Magistrates, and Town Councillors, the Master of the Merchant Company, Dr. Chalmers, and eleven of the city clergymen.

THE SOCIETY FOR THE PROPAGATION OF THE GOSPEL held its annual meeting yesterday at the Hanover Square Rooms, "which," says the reporter, "was crowded with the élite of the rank, beauty, and fashion of the ancient city of Westminster." The Duke of Buccleuch, as High Steward of Westminster, presided. From the statements made at the meeting, it would seem that the Society is not in a very flourishing condition. Lord Robert Grosvenor stated the fact that £31,000 had to be sold out of the capital stock recently to supply the pressing exigencies of the society. The principal speakers were the Bishops of Winchester, St. David's, and

Jamaica, Lord Glenelg, Geo. Byng, Esq., M.P., the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Lord John Manners, M.P., and Lord Sandon, M.P. The speech of the Chancellor of the Exchequer was remarkable as a sign of the times. A little more teaching, reflection, and pressure from without may, perhaps, help to make Mr. Goulburn a thorough voluntary. He is thus reported to have addressed the meeting:

The right honourable gentleman proceeded to combat the notion, that it was the duty of the Legislature, as such, to undertake the evangelisation of distant countries. He admitted responsibility, but such as referred to the tenour of their legislation in carrying onward and sanctioning religious truth, rather than by voting grants of the public money for purposes for the furtherance of which it was better to encourage such societies as that with which they were now connected. It had been exceedingly difficult to obtain grants for objects about which different views were entertained; and it often happened, that the attempt to enforce obnoxious payments went far to destroy the essentials of religion, engendering strife and enmity with those they were most anxious to bring into the fold of their common Christianity. The benefits derived from political advantages were of short endurance, and apt to fade away; but the ties of Christianity connected them in a still closer bond [hear, hear].

The Bishop of Jamaica regretted that the wisdom of the legislature had thought proper to withdraw from the society the poor pittance which it had received. It was quite clear that the hour had arrived when the church must exert itself for its own perpetuity [cheers]. Vigorous efforts to raise subscriptions were resolved on.

SLAVERY AND THE FREE CHURCH.—A public meeting of the members and friends of the Glasgow Emancipation Society was held in the City-hall, on Tuesday evening, for the purpose of passing a memorial to the General Assembly of the Free Church, imploring them to renounce Christian fellowship with American slaveholders, and to send back the money. The meeting was a very large and influential one; and, on the motion of Mr. Watson, Councillor Turner was called to the chair. The meeting was addressed by Messrs. Henry C. Wright, Frederick Douglass, James M. Buffum, and George Thompson, in long and eloquent speeches, which were listened to with the most profound attention; and resolutions were adopted by acclamation in favour of the object of the meeting. A Mr. James Pinkerton and another individual defended the conduct of the Free Church, but the feeling of the meeting was entirely against them.—*Glasgow Argus*.

SECESSION FROM THE SCOTCH EPISCOPAL CHURCH.—Mr. J. H. Crowder, the incumbent of St. James's Episcopal Chapel, Edinburgh, gave notice to his congregation from the pulpit on Sunday last, that he had resigned the pastoral charge of that chapel, and that he was about to withdraw from the communion of the Scottish Episcopal Church, and to identify himself with those who had lately seceded from it.—*Scotsman*.

At the weekly meeting of the Repeal Association on Monday, the amount of rent was only £70. The attendance was very meagre.

MORE EVICTIONS IN GALWAY.—The *Galway Vindicator* states that there were twenty-three cases of evictions disposed of at Outerard sessions on Friday last.

LORD LINCOLN A CANDIDATE AGAIN.—The noble secretary for Ireland has come forward for the Falkirk district of burghs, in the room of Mr. Baird, who has resigned. The arrangement appears to have been made in London, without the knowledge of the constituency. It happens, however, that a majority of the electors were already pledged to support Mr. Wilson, of Dundee, a free-trader, whenever a vacancy should occur. A meeting was held at Falkirk, a few days ago, when it was determined, with Mr. Wilson's consent, to support Lord Lincoln, provided he would pledge himself in the event of a general election to leave the field open to Mr. Wilson. The noble lord has, however, refused to give the pledge, on the ground that it would be unconstitutional; the free-trade electors have consequently determined to have their own candidate. A contest will probably be the result, which will, in all likelihood, leave the noble secretary for Ireland to rejoin his fellow-secretary for the colonies in his search for an inlet to the House of Commons.

THE COURT OF COMMON PLEAS have decided (Mr. Justice Maule dissenting) that notices of objection against the name of a person being retained on the list of voters for a borough, which notices were signed by him as objector, with the addition of the true place of abode, but being another and different place from that inserted against his name on the list of voters, are sufficient.

At the dinner given by the Lord Mayor to the Ministers, on Wednesday, Sir R. Peel, in an eloquent speech, proposed the health of King Louis Philippe, which was drunk with the utmost enthusiasm.

THE ANTI-CORN-LAW LEAGUE (says the *Devonshire Chronicle*), have forwarded to the distressed agricultural labourers of Torrington and the neighbouring parishes, a quantity of beds and bedding.

BIBLE MOVEMENT.—Ten thousand copies of the sacred Scriptures have, within the last three months, been put into circulation by the congregation connected with Bridge-street chapel.—*Bristol Mercury*.

BRIDPORT ELECTION COMMITTEE.—The committee met on Saturday, and resolved—that Mr. COCHRANE was not duly elected, and that Mr. ROMILLY was duly elected, and ought to be returned; and that they would report to the House that the manner in which Mr. COCHRANE was returned was by the transfer of Rocket's vote. The whole proceedings did not occupy much more than half an hour.

CORN MARKET. MARK LANE. THIS DAY.

	Wheat	Barley	Oats	Beans	Peas	Flour
English	2220	940	1810			
Scotch						
Irish				2320		
Foreign	730					

English wheat firm, at a trifling improvement on last week.

Terms for advertising in the *Nonconformist*.
For 7 lines....5s. Od. | For 10 lines....6s. Od.
For every additional line.....4d.

* All communications to the Editor should be addressed
to the office, 3, Whitefriars-street, Fleet-street.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

"J. Poole." The insertion of his letter in its present shape would expose us to an action for libel.

"A Constant Reader and a Lover of Principle." His letter contains sterling good sense, but it involves a too decided theological bias for our columns.

The suggestion of our Maidstone correspondent is valuable, and we may possibly avail ourselves of it; but we fear he takes a more sanguine view of its feasibility than those who are conversant with facts would justify.

"A Villager." As soon as we have room.

"One who Uses, as did Paul, great Plainness of Speech." Declined.

"A Lover of Truth and Liberty." We cannot insert his communication, but we proceed to answer his queries, of which we presume he has kept a copy. 1st. Yes, in the absence of the vicar. 2nd. No. 3rd. Yes. 4th. Out of the church-rate.

By an accidental omission, we neglected to acknowledge having borrowed an article, inserted last week, headed "The Daily Paper," from our spirited contemporary, the *Leeds Times*.

The Nonconformist.

LONDON: WEDNESDAY, APRIL 29, 1846.

WE beg to announce to our subscribers that we shall publish our usual supplementary numbers during the month of May, to enable us to give reports of the meetings of the various religious and philanthropic societies. The first extra number will be published on Monday morning next, May 4th, containing reports of the anniversary meetings of societies in connexion with the Baptist denomination, &c.

SUMMARY.

OUR readers are long ere this made acquainted with the result of Sir Thomas Wilde's application to the Court of Exchequer for a new trial in the case of *Gathercole v. Miall*. The decision of the judges has been no disappointment to us as far as it affects our personal interest in the affair. We anticipated failure. But we must confess to our regret, as well as surprise, that the doctrine laid down by Baron Parke respecting the relation of the clergy to the public press, has neither been so explicitly confirmed, nor so unequivocally retracted, as to afford ground for future action. The question appears to have excited extreme interest amongst the members of the bar. The court was crowded, and the deepest attention was paid both to the pleadings and to the judgment. Sir T. Wilde acquitted himself, as he always does, with that sagacity, boldness, and power, which have raised him to the conspicuous position he so deservedly occupies. The same praise cannot be given to the several judges. Their decisions are confused, hasty, in some cases self-contradictory, in others, contradictory one of another. Baron Parke's *obiter dictum* has resolved itself into a thick mist, through which it is obviously impossible for the conductors of the press to see their way to a safe conclusion. The reports in the daily papers were necessarily meagre. We had hoped to have presented our readers this week with a verbatim report of the whole case; we are compelled, however, to defer doing so until Wednesday next, when we purpose giving, from the short-hand writer's notes, a literal transcript of all that was said. We owe it to the public to place on record a full and complete account of every legal step hitherto taken in this important matter.

Another week has passed since we last reported progress, or rather summed up the proceedings of Parliament—for all parties appear to have given up hopes of further advance for the present, and we are unable to congratulate our readers on the removal of the accumulating difficulties which impede the onward movement of legislation. Rarely does it happen that so many interests are involved in any Parliamentary measure as are bound up with the Premier's free-trade scheme,—still more rarely that the country submits with so much resignation, we might almost say acquiescence, to the obstructive policy adopted by certain parties in Parliament. We can only account for the apathy by supposing a notion to be prevalent that before any general steps are taken to protest against delay, the principal obstruction will be removed. "What will the Lords do?" has given place to the more pressing inquiry, "Is the Irish Coercion Bill read a first time?" and the answer in the latter case is no more satisfactory than in the former. Up to the end of last week the measure was advanced by one speech. On Monday night, however, some progress was apparently made, or, at all events, the number of speakers ready to deliver their opinions on the first reading of the bill was somewhat diminished; and then the discussion was again postponed to the end of the week. Thursday is the day fixed for the resumption of the debate; but, as other motions have precedence, it will not probably come on till Friday. Whether the division will even then take place is very doubtful.

Never, perhaps, did Sir R. Peel resolve on a more

foolish and impolitic act than when he determined to press forward his bill for repressing crime in Ireland, under cover of the free-trade measure. Elaborate as was his attempt at justification of himself on Monday last, it will fail of carrying conviction to a single intelligent mind. Had he pressed forward his commercial measure, he might have sent it up to the House of Lords in a few days at most. His position would then have been free from most of the difficulties by which it is now encompassed. We have no faith, indeed, in the recent rumour which speaks of the probable resignation of ministers, and the dissolution of Parliament, but we are not sure that Sir Robert's heels will not be tripped up before he is able to give effect to his projected policy. For example, the Factories Bill is about to be read a second time, on the understanding come to by its supporters that the blanks in those clauses which prescribe the hours of labour shall be filled up, in committee, with the word "eleven" instead of "ten." How will the Ministry deal with this measure? They are pledged against the Ten-hours Bill. When last this question was mooted, they vigorously resisted eleven hours. If they now give way, they will lose something of what remains to them of moral power. If they stand fast by their former pledges, they will, in all probability, be beaten. Here, then, is another difficulty to be removed prior to the passing of the Corn Importation Bill. Nor have we the least guarantee that, supposing this difficulty is got over, others of like character will not be thrust forward.

Government has at length stepped forward to grapple with the difficulties which have arisen out of the railway mania of last year; and, strange to say, the mode in which they propose to interfere has won the approval of almost all parties—so altered has become the tone of feeling in reference to these gigantic projects! The plan put forward by the Ministry may be readily described. Parliament will suffer no railway bill to be read a third time until a copy of the bill has been submitted to a meeting of the scrip or shareholders, specially called for that purpose, constituted of persons producing thereat scrip or shares representing not less than one-third of the whole capital involved in the concern, and an approval of the bill has been signified by three-fifths of the total amount of scrip or shares produced at the meeting. This is one feature of the scheme. The other was propounded in the House of Lords. The Earl of Dalhousie has introduced a bill, giving power to provisional directors, or to any five shareholders, after due notice given, to hold a meeting for the purpose of dissolving railway companies at which, if a clear majority of the stock vote in favour of dissolution, it will be held sufficient in law. These provisions will weed the country of many useless and extravagant speculations, will afford a door of escape for multitudes of honest but deluded subscribers, and will bring within the compass of easy management such schemes as promise a secure investment of capital.

The other proceedings of Parliament have been of minor importance, and scarcely need specific notice. It will suffice to direct the attention of our readers to our parliamentary intelligence.

The Charitable Trusts Bill excites deep discontent throughout the land. The rigid discussion it is undergoing at the hands of the press, and the public stir it is exciting, will possibly make the authors of this despotic measure recede from the offensive position they have chosen to take up. Petitions are already beginning to find their way, in increasing numbers, into the House of Lords. The bill is to be proceeded with by the Lord Chancellor, who will allow no other exemptions than those he has already admitted. It is high time, therefore, to be up and stirring. Even the *Edinburgh Review*, avowedly friendly to the measure, admits that if the bill should pass, the Commissioners will have "dictatorial" powers, "such as no English court—indeed, such as no English sovereign, has ever possessed;" that the value of the property subjected to their control will not be less than from seventy-five to one hundred millions; that they will be "enabled to act as the managers of about one-fifth of the cultivated land in England;" that they "may authorise almost any use whatever to be made of the charity property, throwing it into a park, removing it out of sight, or letting it to a friend—while, as every transaction which they sanction is to be valid in law and in equity, there will be no means of correcting their errors;" that they "may screen any amount of fraud or misconduct;" that "in the course of a few years all the trustees of charities under one hundred pounds a year, and of the municipal charities, will be their nominees, and, whether appointed by them or not, the whole body will be under their control; they may harass them by inquiries, annoy them by regulations, censure them by their reports;" and that "an ill-judging or careless commissioner may allow parish after parish to be pauperised by its charities." Thus far as to the general character of the measure. The bearing it will have upon Dissenters we have already pointed out. It is a deliberate insult aimed at Nonconformity. It grasps with greedy hands the management of all those institutions erected and maintained by the voluntary principle. Whilst its ostensible design is to rectify the mal-administration of charitable trusts, its authors refuse to exempt from its operation those who are brought within its range by a legal definition merely, or, as we may fitly term it, by a verbal accident, whose affairs, nevertheless, are not rightly subject to Parliamentary interference, and whose independence this bill seeks to abridge and destroy. It

must be nipped in the bud as one of the most mischievous projects of modern days. We are happy to find that a public meeting of Dissenters is to take place at Newcastle this week, for the consideration of this important subject. We hope the spirited example of our friends in the north will be universally copied.

MODEST RETIREMENT.

"In shade let it rest, like a delicate flower;
Oh! breathe on it softly—it dies in an hour."

THE law proceedings in which we have lately been involved have been brought to a close, by the unanimous refusal of the Court of Exchequer to grant a rule for a new trial. The costs of both actions, together with the damages awarded by the Cambridge jury, by whomsoever borne, constitute a serious penalty. No doubt, we must have committed some grave offence—one, the turpitude of which British law seeks to imprint for all time to come upon our conscience. We are not indisposed to confess, to repent, or to amend—but, after a careful study of the whole case, we declare our utter incompetency to make out what, in the opinion of our judges, is the fault for which punishment is meted out to us. In response to legal monition, what ought we to acknowledge? in obedience, what ought we hereafter to abstain from doing? Are we mulcted for using strong language? or for attacking an individual whose office law regards as private? or for commenting upon the acts of a public servant, in a matter not legitimately open to remark? or for evident malice? or for active nonconformity? The *gravamen* of our offence appears to have been, that we assailed a clergyman in no very measured terms, for insults offered in almost every conceivable shape of indignity to a numerous body of religionists, and that we selected, as the occasion of our remarks, his intolerant conduct in the breaking up of an old charity, and the construction of a new one. But so far as we can ascertain from the separate and conflicting judgments delivered in the Court of Exchequer, our chief misfortune would seem to have been that we were ignorant of various points of law, about which the opinions of the bench itself are unsettled and divided.

The question is still left in uncertainty, whether a clergyman, in the performance of his official duties, may be regarded by the press as a public servant, and be freely dealt with accordingly. It would, of course, be presumptuous in us to speak with confidence, where the highest authorities intimate their doubts. But surely analogy leads to an incontrovertible conclusion on this point. The liberty of the press has been established, not so much by parliamentary liberality, or by judicial wisdom, as by the common-sense of society working itself out by the verdicts of juries. It has been universally felt that the public mind must, for the sake of the general safety, exercise a control over the official proceedings of public functionaries—that the allowance of considerable latitude of speech is in such cases productive of far less evil than any rude interference with this prerogative—that although the right may oftentimes be abused, such abuses furnish no sufficient ground for the abrogation of the right—and that where individuals may have just reason to complain, it is on the whole safer to leave them to the usual penalty of prominence, than, by perpetual meddling, to fritter away the great safeguard of British freedom.

If such be the view taken by law of comments upon public officers in general, it becomes not less, but more strikingly just in reference to the state-clergy in particular. They derive, as do other functionaries, their maintenance from national funds—they are appointed to their trust by no one central and responsible authority—they are not removable at pleasure—they are scarcely to be reached by ecclesiastical discipline—they wield a power more subtle and more influential than any other class of state officials—their duties take them much closer to men's consciences, give to them better opportunities for twining themselves about men's sacred convictions, and place at their disposal peculiar facilities, if they be disposed to use them, for perverting judgment, for embittering feeling, for suppressing all the higher instincts of humanity, and for subverting all rational freedom by poisoning the sources out of which it flows. If any men ought to be exposed to searching observations by the press, they more—if any ought to be made sensible that the public eye is upon them, they especially—if, in regard to any, the evils of enforced silence would greatly outweigh those of extreme license, these are of all others the men. The meshes of law are too coarse to net the large proportion of their delinquencies. The influences they exert, when mischievous, can only be neutralised by the freest utterance of opinion. But for the press, they would inevitably become the dry-rot in the social structure. Their intolerance would eat away the heart of all generous relationships; and England, priest-ridden in an age of general enlightenment, would speedily degenerate into a trembling, cowering, gibbering slave. Judges, perhaps, cannot see this—it is not to be met with amongst the heaps of their legal rubbish; but it is a truth which is taking a firm hold upon the mind of the community; and such decisions as we have recently witnessed will do much to suggest, not the propriety of subjecting state priests to the vigilance of the press, but the necessity of getting rid of them altogether.

We would advocate no uncourteous prying into the acts of private life. In respect of most officials there can be no necessity, and therefore no excuse, for any such impertinence. In the case of the clergy, how-

ever, the rule, easy enough of application to other classes, becomes almost useless, and sometimes dangerous. Their office puts them into close contact with the private life of others—their fitness for that office depends very mainly on their own private life. Profanity, ineptitude, carelessness as to truth, and numerous other vices—properly enough shielded from public comment in private individuals—are fit subjects for remark when exhibited by the clergy. They are public teachers, and these are actual disqualifications for the due discharge of their functions. The object of their ministration is religion as the true basis of morality, and personal character and conduct enter largely into the influence they exert upon the fulfilment of their mission. So long as the people acquiesce in the public maintenance of this class, so long will public safety demand that it consist of men qualified for the discharge of their functions by sound learning, aptness to teach, unblemished morals, and sincere piety. These things, which in other men are matters of privacy, are in the clergy part and parcel of their profession. In passing judgment upon a religious teacher as a state official, these must needs be taken into account. His sphere of duty and of action is such, that there can be no medium, as to him, between entire exemption from all remark, or full exposure of his whole life to criticism. There is nothing he can do which does not affect, in one way or another, his professional character—there is nothing he can do which does not illustrate, more or less, his fitness or unfitness for office.

The course of reasoning pursued above applies with especial emphasis to the clerical management of charities, whether private or parochial. In all such matters, the professional influence of the clergyman is used as a leverage for obtaining subscriptions—his official station determines the share of power allotted to him—and the modes of distribution which he prescribes touch most nearly the interests of that section of the community entrusted by law to his spiritual care. Under the most favourable circumstances, it is dangerous to entrust a money power to those whose official object it is to impress and to fashion mind; but, assuredly, to exempt public servants from all observation in the use of this power—to tell us, as the Court of Exchequer virtually does, that this particular branch of clerical functions is to be sacredly shielded from public criticism—to make an exception here, where it becomes most imperative that the rule should hold good—introduces a novel and most mischievous doctrine into the already heterogeneous mass of judge-made law.

Upon this doctrine we are condemned in heavy costs and excessive damages. All that is accidental and personal in this case will soon be forgotten. The principle involved in the judgment will remain. Its fuller development will work its own destruction. These are not the times in which to confer additional immunities upon the clergy of the Establishment. Their pretensions are already far too overweening for the permanence of their power. In the long run, law is no match for common-sense. It will be found at last, that the position of state-paid ecclesiastics must be guarded by legal anomalies, or be surrendered as untenable. For a time, the bench will throw its *egis* over the church. In doing so, it will be called upon to trample underfoot, one by one, all the recognised principles of constitutional law. Self-respect will, probably, arrest it in this downward career—if self-respect be wanting, public indignation will supply its place. They who are greedy of power, must not ask for retirement. If the clergy shrink from the publicity of state service, we can point out to them a straight path to the privacy which they affect. Let them cease to claim and to appropriate national funds, and the press will thenceforth leave them to their chosen seclusion. Whilst they continue to hire themselves to Government, they must learn to put up with the same free criticism, to which all other officials are exposed. Englishmen are not so proud of them as to vest them with irresponsible power.

GATHERCOLE v. MIALL.—THE LAW OF THE CASE.

THE Court of Exchequer has refused a rule in this case, and has found itself competent at once to pronounce a decision upon points involving consequences of a most serious and important character. The warmest admirers of the members of that court must regret that time was not taken for the purpose of well considering and weighing the terms in which their judgment should be conveyed and the rule refused. As it was, each judge came either to a different conclusion on one part of the case from his brother-judges, or else so changed and modified the terms in which he expressed his own opinion as to fritter away the force of the conclusion at which he arrived.

The court was unanimous in declaring that the license of criticism upon the *public conduct of public men* was to be measured only by its *bona fides* and want of malice, and not by its *actual truth*.

In other words, that such criticisms, although assuming as facts matters not true, are privileged if made *bona fide* and without *actual malice*. In ordinary libels malice is *presumed*; whereas, in the class of cases last alluded to, it must be *proved*.

Two judges were of opinion that sermons preached in a *parish church*, by the minister of the parish, did not fall within the rule applicable to the *public conduct of public men*! The judgments of the two judges alluded to were fortified by no *reasons* that are intelligible. Some floating notion of the law of *copyright* seemed to be the influential motive which determined

the opinion of one of them, although a moment's reflection would suffice to show the want of all analogy between the subjects. The terms in which the proposition was stated by each of the assenting judges had no consistency. Baron Alderson expressed his dissent from what must be called the *obiter dictum* of Baron Parke in very ambiguous and uncertain language; and, although Baron Rolfe was very clear in disclaiming that particular opinion, one could not but feel that he made several blunders in his short argument. What a pity it is that, on so important a question, these eminent persons did not condescend to take a little time to weigh the expressions and reasons by which the public and the profession ought to be instructed and guided! As it stands, it is a judgment which has gone forth without authority, and will be treated without respect. Is not the church a public place? Is not the clergyman a *public man*? Have the *public* no interest in his *doctrine*? One would think that the church of the parish was the church of the *public* of the parish—that the act of preaching was a public act *quoad* the parish. In contemplation of law, it is the place of public resort. All notices of rates and vestry meetings used to be published in the church during divine service, and are now on the *doors* of the church. For what object, unless to give public notice? Had the law prevailed in early times, Protestantism would have been an idle dream—the Reformation must have waited for the Millennium. The Court was unanimous in declaring that the conduct of the clergyman in relation to the parochial charities was, at all events, not the subject of privileged comment. Even Baron Rolfe agreed in this; and they all stated the proposition in the broadest terms. Surely the public have an interest that rules for parish charities shall not be made, by the *authorised* spiritual guides of the *public*, the vehicles of unchristian sentiments and foul aspirations. Is no privileged comment to be made on notorious clerical adultery, swindling, intoxication, or other nameless delinquencies, unless the facts appear in judicial inquiries? Is the conduct of a clergyman who publicly administers and solicits the charity of his *parishioners* a matter of no *public* interest? The religious rights and liberties of Englishmen rest upon an insecure foundation if the judgment of the Court of Exchequer can be supported.

COUNTY ELECTIONS.

THE bill for shortening the duration of county elections to one day, has been refused a second reading in the House of Commons, on the single ground that the change would inconvenience the pluralists who have votes in five or six different counties. Colonel Sibthorp "has a vote in five counties, and in the present position of public affairs he wishes to exercise his vote in all." A huge outcry is to be made, if, on the prompting of the League, an individual purchases a freehold to which a vote is attached by law; but Colonel Sibthorp is to vote in five counties for the maintenance of the Corn Laws, and the notorious corruption and bribery of a second day's poll is to be kept up for his convenience in this matter. Millions of men as capable as he, are to be without a vote at all,—are to compose, in fact, a slave class. But because such men as Colonel Sibthorp and Lord George Bentinck admit their predilection for voting in many counties to keep things as they are, they are to have the general deterioration of the polls thrown in by way of help. And this, as Lord Brougham is understood to have once exclaimed in the House of Lords, "you call justice."

When evils arrive at a certain degree of hostility with public feeling, whether that be by the increase of the evil or the improvement of the public mind, the appearance is produced of an effort on the part of the supporters of the mischief to put their case in a damaging view. Thus the conductors of war upon the Sutlej thrust into the faces of the community the massacres with which it was accompanied; and the Archbishop, by the "excuse comes prologue" of his prayers, points every Little Riding-Hood to the wolf's teeth of her grandmother. Many of these things are on the decline. Men have reached a point where they will not much longer be governed by anything but what at least makes an approach to the right. Conventionalisms are heard cracking in all directions; like the tinkling of icicles when they begin to foresee a thaw. There must be some rule set up and established, whereby a man's debts and credits shall be settled, by something else than an ancestral custom of receiving one-and-six-pence in the pound, or the habit, even though it went so far that man's memory telles not to the contrary, of drawing half or no rations from the public stock, in order that somebody else may swallow five.

The time is not come, but coming. All good men are preparing for it; all wise ones are making ready for it, whether they like it or not. Of the public men upon the stage, if one will not help, another will. When old ones will not fulfil the public pleasure, new ones rise; and this the old ones, in their ineptitude, call a revolution.

SIR JOHN ROSS.—It is understood that Sir John Ross has been reinstated in his office as Consul at Stockholm; for which place he left England on Thursday. A short time ago, Mr. Buchanan, his solicitor, applied to the Court of Bankruptcy that a sword presented to the bankrupt by the King of Sweden might be given up to him. The Court could not make any order on the point, but left it to the discretion of the assignees; who have acceded to the request.—*Morning Post*.

PERSECUTION OF THE PROTESTANT ARMENIANS.

(From the *Witness*.)

Very important intelligence has just been received from Constantinople. Turkey contains about three millions of the Armenian nation. Of this body the great majority are found within the limits of the ancient Armenia; but the race is scattered over the whole of the Turkish empire, especially in the large towns; and in Constantinople there are not fewer than a hundred and fifty thousand resident Armenians. The church of their nation, though not acknowledging the Pope as its head, like many of the oriental churches, is sunk in Romish superstition—the mass, the worship of saints, relics, and pictures.

In 1831 a mission was set on foot to this people by the American Board of Missions. The head-quarters of the missionaries was Constantinople; but they had stations in other towns of the empire—Smyrna in the Levant; Trebizond and Erzoum in the north. The missionaries conversed with persons of all ranks, preached the gospel, established schools, and translated the Scriptures. The Spirit blessed their labours. Many thousands were intellectually enlightened, repudiating the traditions they had previously received, and giving their assent to the doctrines of the gospel; and of those thus convinced in their understanding, not a few gave evidence of being savingly regenerated in their hearts.

The change passing on the Armenian nation attracted the notice and aroused the jealousy of their ecclesiastical superiors. The reading of the Bible in the modern version was condemned, and the youth were prohibited from attending the mission schools. These measures were found ineffectual to extinguish the awakening zeal of the people, and others of a more stringent nature were had recourse to. Of the converts, some were sent into distant exile, others were overwhelmed by heavy fines, others were thrown into dungeons, and their feet and necks loaded with heavy chains, and some were bastinadoed to death.

Still the numbers of the converts increased; they became too numerous to be sent into exile—too numerous for the dungeons to contain them—and the ecclesiastics and primates of the Armenian church immediately changed their tactics. On the first Sabbath of February the patriarch solemnly excommunicated with anathemas all the adherents of the "New Doctrines." But it was not empty anathemas which was launched against them: their positions as anathematized persons has been made a pretext, with the connivance of the Turkish authorities, for putting all of them out of the pale and protection of the civil law—for depriving them, without appeal, of their houses, shops, and trades—for false actions in court, and false imprisonments. The numbers who are thus suffering amount to several hundreds. They are chiefly men in the middle walks of life. They have borne their persecutions hitherto with great patience and steadfastness; and should they continue so to do, who can tell the influence their noble example may have on the spiritual regeneration of Syria? In behalf of these sufferers, Mr. Dwight, the well-known and much-respected American missionary, makes the following appeal in his own name, and in that of his brethren of the American Board:—

And now in behalf of these our persecuted brethren in Turkey, we, as their most natural representatives, feel constrained to address evangelical and Protestant Christians throughout the world. They have uncommon claims for our co-operation and sympathy. Having embraced cordially and earnestly the eternal truths of the Bible, and taken it as the sole standard of appeal for doctrine, they must be regarded as having the same faith as that of the Protestant churches. But, besides this, they are made to suffer for the very name of Protestant—a name attached to them by all their enemies as a reproach, and made to be synonymous with blasphemer and atheist. Are not men who are made to bear our name, and who are substantially of our faith, in a city of Europe, in the nineteenth century, in the presence of unpersecuted Greeks and Catholics, and in the presence of the representatives of six Protestant powers, when exposed to every hardship and wrong, merely for their religious opinions, entitled to appeal to enlightened Protestant countries for sympathy and aid, and for the exertion of influence in their favour?

We believe that they are thus entitled, and that they will find all need aid. And, therefore, we have actually taken upon ourselves the responsibility of receiving, in the name of Christ, one or two hundred persons thrown by oppression upon the wide world, without the right to work for their own support; and of providing them for the present with food and shelter at the charge of the universal church of Christ, persuaded that this is what all the friends of the rights of conscience would expect and demand at our hands. And we shall not cease this necessary provision for them till we see, from the want of the supply of funds, that there are none who care for the interests of the truth here. "Remember them that are in bonds, as bound with them."

But, although we here allude to their pecuniary wants, our principal object in making this statement, is to excite such an expression of opinion on the part of our fellow Christians in Protestant countries, as shall secure for the persecuted Evangelical Armenians in Turkey, the free exercise of their religious sentiments; and that it shall no longer be the sole condition of their being unmolested in their persons or property, that they conform to doctrines and ceremonies which they and we regard as forbidden by the Word of God.

EFFECTS OF THE DELAY OF THE FREE-TRADE MEASURE.

—A correspondent of the *Times* writes from Manchester:—"The opposition hitherto given to Sir Robert Peel's bill, too frequently 'frivolous and vexatious,' has been productive of extensive mischief. The staple manufacture of this district has been almost paralysed, and both masters and men have been driven nearly to the verge of ruin. The delay has been detrimental to all classes, and if much longer continued the effects will be disastrous. At present there are upwards of 1,500 handloom weavers in this town entirely unemployed."

THE NEW HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT.—On Monday a portion of the new Houses of Parliament, consisting of the committee-rooms of the south facade (some dozen in number) was thrown open to the public for the convenience of several railway committees.

THE MIRROR OF PARLIAMENT.

RAILWAY LEGISLATION.

In the House of Commons, on Thursday last, Sir Robert Peel moved the adoption of the following resolutions, to constitute a sessional order for the guidance of the House in disposing of the railway bills now before Parliament:—

I. That this House will not read a third time any bill to empower any company (whether intended to be incorporated by such bill, or already incorporated by act of Parliament) to construct a railway, unless three clear days before the third reading there shall have been deposited at the Private Bill-office, there to be open to the inspection of all parties, certificate, signed and authenticated in manner hereinafter mentioned, and comprising the particulars hereinafter expressed, and stating the following facts, viz.:—

1. That a copy of the bill was submitted to the consideration of a meeting of the scripholders of the company, or (in case of a company already incorporated) of the shareholders or stockholders of the company, specially called for that purpose.

2. That such meeting was called by advertisements, inserted once in each of two consecutive weeks in the *London Gazette* (if the railway be an English or Scotch railway), or in the *London* and *Dublin Gazettes* (if the railway be an Irish railway), and, in each case, in at least three London daily newspapers, and not less than three times in each such paper, in each of such two consecutive weeks.

3. In the case of the company being intended to be incorporated by the bill, that such meeting was constituted of persons producing thereat scrip of the company representing not less than one-third part of the whole capital proposed to be raised by the company under the bill, such scrip having been actually issued, or the deposits in respect thereof having been paid before the 31st of March in the present year.

4. In the case of the company being already incorporated—That such meeting was held, except so far as is herein otherwise provided, according to the constitution of the company, and was constituted of shareholders or stockholders thereof competent to vote at the ordinary meetings of the company, and representing either personally or as proxies not less than one-third part of the whole capital or stock of the company.

5. That at such meeting the bill was approved of by persons producing thereat scrip equal to at least three-fifths of the total amount of scrip produced at the meeting; or in the case of a company already incorporated, by three-fifths at least of the meeting; the votes being given and computed according to the constitution of the company.

II. That for the purposes of this order it shall be competent for the chairman of any meeting called in pursuance thereof, in the event of the above-prescribed quorum of scrip shares or stock (as the case may be) not being represented at such meeting, to cause the votes of the persons constituting the said meeting, approving or not approving of the bill, to be taken and recorded, and then to adjourn the same to some day, hour, and place, to be declared by the chairman, such day not being less than three days, and not more than one week, from the original day of meeting; and such day, hour, and place being, in the meantime, advertised twice in each of three London daily newspapers; and at such adjourned meeting it shall be competent to the chairman thereof to cause to be taken and recorded the votes of such of the persons constituting the same as have not voted at the original meeting; and the total amount of votes given at the original and adjourned meeting shall be received as if given at one and the same meeting.

III. That such certificate shall also comprise, in a tabular form, the following particulars:—

1. The day, time, and place of the meeting, and of the adjourned meeting (if any).

2. The dates of the insertion of the advertisements for the meeting, and the names of the newspapers in which they were inserted.

3. The names and addresses of the persons producing scrip at the meeting; or, in the case of a company already incorporated, the names and addresses of the shareholders or stockholders present at the meeting.

4. The denoting numbers, and the amount of the scrip respectively produced by the persons so producing the same at the meeting; or, in the case of a company already incorporated, the respective amounts of shares or stock held or represented by the shareholders or stockholders attending the meeting.

5. The fact of the approval or non-approval of the bill (as the case may be) by the several persons producing scrip at the meeting, or by the several shareholders attending the meeting.

6. The total amount of scrip produced at such meeting, and the amount thereof produced by the persons approving of the bill; or, in the case of a company already incorporated, the total amount of shares or stock represented, either in person or by proxy at the meeting, and the amount thereof so represented by persons approving of the bill.

7. The total amount of the capital proposed to be raised by the company under the bill; or, in the case of a company already incorporated, the total amount of the capital or stock of such company.

IV. That such certificate shall be signed by the chairman of the meeting and by one of the solicitors of the company; and the authenticity of such certificate shall be verified by the signature of the Parliamentary agent depositing the same."

The reasons adduced on previous occasions as justifying the interference of Parliament to place a check upon the passing of railway bills under existing circumstances, and to enable shareholders and scripholders to dissolve, were again urged by Sir Robert. First, the locking up of an enormous amount of capital,—in 1844, 37 bills passed, involving an outlay of £17,987,000; in 1845, 118 bills, outlay £80,484,000; in 1846, application is made for 519 bills, involving an outlay of £304,000,000. Then came the embarrassment which the expenditure of so much capital in one direction had occasioned to the legitimate pursuits of the country; the great fall which had taken place in the value of the schemes; the great desire evinced by persons to relieve themselves from their engagements; and the state of the law, which prevented them from obtaining relief in every case where a single shareholder chose to object. In addition, he stated a number of facts illustrative of what is called in the railway world "rigging the market;" showing the extraordinary methods by which managing committees and individuals contrived to impose upon the unwary. It was not unlikely that Parliament might yet see cause to expose these transactions, for the benefit of the public. Sir Robert explained the leading provisions of the bill for enabling shareholders to dissolve their companies, and which would that evening be

introduced into the House of Lords. As to the present resolutions, (which had been circulated with the votes,) the House were sufficiently aware of their tenour. Many of the most objectionable schemes were entirely unopposed, and would necessarily pass into a law unless some rule for the guidance of the House was laid down. As an illustration, he mentioned, that there existed within twenty-five miles of the House a valley through which no fewer than eleven different lines propose to run, and which eleven different companies propose to execute. Parliament could only give its consent to one of them; and as the law stands at present, the other ten companies had no power to dissolve themselves.

The resolutions met with unanimous concurrence; the only difference of opinion expressed having reference to the point of time when the check should have been applied.

Mr. BERNAL thought the evil should have been guarded against at a much earlier period. The SOLICITOR-GENERAL justified the delay, on the ground that it would have been impossible at an earlier period to impose restrictions: Government could not have undertaken to select four or five bills out of five hundred. Mr. LABOUCHERE considered the course recommended by Sir Robert Peel as the best which could be adopted under the circumstances. Mr. HUDSON thought that the proposed measures would not have obtained the support they will now do had they been brought forward at an earlier period. Mr. M. PHILLIPS, Mr. NEWDEGATE, Mr. WARD, and Mr. F. BARING, expressed their approval. Mr. B. DENISON regretted that the spirit of speculation had not been checked sooner. The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER urged that interference could not have taken place sooner with success. Now that the public frenzy had cooled, Parliament could appeal from Philip drunk to Philip sober. The SOLICITOR-GENERAL, in allusion to a remark made by Mr. Gisborne as to scrip, stated that it was legally saleable, and that if a man paid money for scrip he must adhere to his bargain. Lord GEORGE BENTINCK accused the Government of having encouraged speculation; for they discouraged Lord Dalhousie's attempt to check it. Mr. CARDWELL defended the Government.

Mr. T. DUNCOMBE observed that the Government might be responsible for not having proposed these resolutions earlier; but that it certainly was not responsible for any encouragement given to the railway mania. He thought that these resolutions came too late, and did not go far enough; and, therefore, after they were carried, he would submit to the consideration of the House another resolution, which, if adopted, would show the composition of these provisional committees and the object for which their projects had been got up. He should propose that it be an instruction to the committee on every private bill originated in that House, relating to any railway, to institute a preliminary inquiry as to the persons, time, and the means by which the enterprise was got up. No honourable committee would object to such an inquiry; but all your bubble schemes would dissolve into thin air before it, and would be no more heard of. He then read from his resolution, a dozen statements, which he insisted should be laid before every committee on a railway bill. Among them, the most material were, a copy of the names, residences, and descriptions of the present and past provisional directors, treasurers, solicitors, and secretaries of the company, the amount of the subscriptions paid by the original allottees, and the amount of shares retained by or for the provisional committee. He then made the House very merry by showing to it a long list of the provisional committee for the Direct Manchester, Leeds, and York Railway Company. It contained 172 names, among which figured those of many peers, many members of Parliament, many hon. and right hon. gentlemen, many aldermen, and many fellows of the Royal Society:—

"Even the church," said the hon. member, "was implicated in those bubble schemes. I find that 102 clergymen, comprising deacons, archdeacons, honourable and right honourable rectors, vicars, and others, gave their spiritual sanction to those railway undertakings [much laughter]. What was the consequence? The parishioners of each of these gentlemen immediately said, 'I see the Rev. Mr. So-and-so is on the provisional committee; he is my rector; I have been accustomed to look up to him, and to take his advice. I know the church always looks well after its own interest [loud laughter on both sides], and I cannot be wrong in embarking in the same boat with my spiritual director' [renewed laughter]."

The hon. member also read to the House the commencement of the prospectus of the Plymouth and Launceston Railway Company, and a letter which he had received along with it, requesting him to become a provisional committee man, and guaranteeing him against any expense in consequence. Other gentlemen had received similar letters; and if they had yielded to the request contained in them, would they not have been guilty of practising a gross fraud upon the public? If so, it behoved the House of Commons to inquire, when these railway bills came before it, who were the concocters of them, and who were employed as decoys on the occasion. He hoped that the Government would accede to his resolutions, as it would save the House much trouble if they were agreed to.

Mr. D'ISRAELI admitted, that the resolution of Mr. Duncombe contained a great deal of good sense, and that the resolutions of Government were not undeserving of approbation. But what was the reason that the remedy for the present state of things was proposed so late? He could see no other reason than this—that the Administration was not equal to the exigency before it. It was quite evident that it had not any confidence in its own convictions, for otherwise it would not have changed twice within two years the amount of the deposits for these railroad schemes. On the Administration, therefore, he threw the responsibility of all the mischief, loss, and ruin, which these schemes had brought upon individuals. He contended, that Sir R. Peel, not only by the speech which he had made on turning up of the first sod of the Trent Valley railroad, but also by a speech which he had previously made in his place in Parliament, had given an unnatural impulse to the railway mania, which was likely to terminate in private ruin as well as in public disgrace:—

Was the Prime Minister of this country (said Mr. D'Israeli)—a minister most eminent and distinguished for his knowledge of finance—was he, at a period described by the Secretary of the Treasury as the climax of the railway mania, justified in coming forward with all this paraphernalia and dramatic effect—coming forward, too, at considerable personal inconvenience—for he had the gout at the time [laughter]—and giving railway adventure the impulse which his great example would necessarily produce [hear, hear, and a laugh]? It was in his power to give the very best proof of the effects of that performance; for he had in his possession a prospectus of a railway company, which the honourable member for Finsbury might probably have met with in his archives of railway enterprise, whereto was prefixed an extract from the speech delivered by the right hon. baronet at the time, to which the attention of the public was specially directed [hear, hear]. Thus, at a moment described as "the height of the railway mania," they find the first Minister of the Crown giving an unnatural impulse to adventure and speculation [hear, hear]. Referring to the ministerial vaunt of "national prosperity," the hon. member said—They were favoured with a Government which was apt to arrogate to itself the credit of all national prosperity—to assert a sort of partnership with Providence [hear, hear, and laughter]. They were told to be grateful to Government if the harvests were good or the seasons favourable. Not an allusion could be made to a good harvest in a prosperous season, but up rose the Minister to tell them of the certain fact that he was then in power. If they spoke of years when labour was employed and capital embarrassed, they were sure to be referred to the first page of "Hansard" to see who were the Ministry of the day [hear, hear].

The hon. member concluded a bitter attack on the Government by contrasting their policy on the corn laws with their policy on these railway bills. On the corn laws they declared that we ought not to interfere with the investment of capital or with the employment of labour, whilst in regard to railways they declared that we must interfere with the former and must interpose for the protection of the latter.

Mr. BRIGHT reminded Lord George Bentinck and Mr. D'Israeli, that till lately they had been among the most thoroughgoing supporters of the Government. It was not till Ministers changed their policy on the corn-laws that they had subjected themselves to these attacks:—

As to the accusations of the noble lord (Lord George Bentinck) against her Majesty's Government for having encouraged gambling speculations, he (Mr. Bright) thought the noble lord should be the very last person in that House to make such a charge. When he (Mr. Bright) first took his seat in that House, he found the noble lord, night after night, attending in his place for the purpose of watching over a bill to defend persons who had been engaged in mad speculation, and who had been implicated in very dangerous gambling, contrary to the spirit and the letter of the law [hear, hear]. He thought if the noble lord were to look back and reflect a little, he would see he was the very last man in that house to set himself up as a grave authority in matters connected with speculation and gambling [hear, hear.]

The Government resolutions having been passed without dissent, Mr. DUNCOMBE formally moved his resolution.

Sir GEORGE CLERK, Mr. HUDSON, and some others, thought difficulty would be found in obtaining the information wished for: guilty parties would not assist in exposing their own acts. Mr. W. COLLETT said, that the examination proposed was inquisitorial, and would prove distressing to many persons who had already suffered enough from their folly.

On the suggestion of Sir GEORGE CLERK, Mr. DUNCOMBE consented to omit from the tenth clause the words "liabilities of the proposed company." As to the eleventh clause, Sir ROBERT PEEL recommended the omission of the words "whether out of the deposits or by loan." Mr. DUNCOMBE agreed; and the resolution passed as amended.

In the House of Lords, on the same evening, the Earl of DALHOUSIE moved the first reading of the bill for enabling Railway Companies to be dissolved. He also brought under notice resolutions, the counterpart of those moved by Sir Robert Peel in the House of Commons, for checking the passage of railway bills through the House. By the bill, power is given to the provisional directors or governing body to call a meeting to dissolve the company; or any five shareholders may address a requisition to the committee requesting a meeting to be held to consider the question of dissolution. Of this meeting due notice is to be given; the determination of the meeting is to be ascertained by scrutineers; those entitled to vote are the actual holders of the shares, whether as original allottees or purchasers of scrip; votes may be given in person or by proxy; if a clear majority of the stock vote in favour of dissolution, it will be sufficient. The scale of voting is to be in conformity with the regulations now applicable to joint stock companies, which are these—every share under five shall each confer a vote, every five shares above ten and below one hundred shall confer an additional vote, and any ten shares above one hundred a further additional vote. As a clear demonstration of opinion, however, is not always attainable, it is proposed, that if one-third of the whole stock be represented at a meeting, such meeting might take the question of dissolution into consideration: and if three-fifths of the whole stock represented at the meeting should vote in favour of dissolution, that should be deemed sufficient, and the company must accordingly be dissolved.

Precautions are taken to name certain trustees, with power to wind up the affairs of the undertaking in the way of an ordinary partnership. They would have the power to possess themselves of the funds of the company, and, after discharging the liabilities, to apply the surplus, if any, proportionally among the *bond fide* shareholders. In case the funds of the company should not be sufficient to cover all the liabilities, then the persons who took possession of the funds should apply them to the reduction of the liabilities; and for the rest, it must be left to those who had trusted an insolvent company to seek their redress at law. Lord Dalhousie thought that these provisions would be sufficient to meet the cases of inchoate companies, provided there existed in such companies a unanimous or a general desire to wind up their affairs: and as regarded those schemes which are now undergoing the consideration of the House or of the Committees, the sessional order would operate as an effectual protection to shareholders who do not wish

the projects with which they are connected to pass into a law.

Lord BROUGHAM, while reserving to himself the power of more minutely considering details, gave a general sanction both to the bill and the sessional order. He was glad to see a prospect of a termination to that railway mania which has reflected little credit on the character of the country, and had grievously damaged its morality.

After a discussion, shared in by a number of peers, the Railway Relief Bill was read a first time, and the resolutions are to be proposed as a sessional order on Monday. Their lordships then adjourned.

On Monday evening the Earl of DALHOUSIE proposed that the railway resolutions of which he had given notice last Thursday should, with certain amendments, be adopted as a sessional order. As the Government had no wish to throw unnecessary obstacles in the way of railroads, he should propose that all bills which now stood for a third reading should be exempted from the operation of these resolutions.

Lord MONTEAGLE objected to the practice of relaxing regulations to meet particular cases. If the resolutions were to apply to any bills, they ought to apply to all; in his opinion the house had great cause for complaint that these propositions had not been brought before Parliament at an earlier period.

After some discussion, in which the Marquis of CLANRICARDE, Lord ASHBURTON, Lord REDESDALE, and Lord RADNOR took part, and in the course of which the general policy of the Government was approved of, though various objections were made to its details, the Earl of DALHOUSIE replied, and the resolutions were agreed to.

THE PROTECTION OF LIFE (IRELAND) BILL.

On the motion for the resumption of the adjourned debate on this bill, on Friday evening,

Mr. SMITH O'BRIEN rose to put a question to Lord George Bentinck, which the noble Lord had been kind enough to tell him he would answer. It was this—Supposing the Government brought in a bill to suspend the operation of the corn-law *immediately*, with respect to Ireland, for a period of three months, would the noble lord and the party who acted with him be prepared to support such a measure? He called upon Sir R. Peel to reconsider the present measure; it would totally estrange the Irish people and their representatives, who had hitherto given the Government an independent support on the Free-trade measures which he had submitted to Parliament, would feel it their duty to withdraw the support. He again complained of the manner in which a portion of the English press were urging on the Government to measures of coercion.

Lord GEORGE BENTINCK did not think that opening the ports would relieve the distress under which the Irish people were at present labouring. His own opinion was, that the distress was exaggerated, and it was not corn, but money, that the Irish needed; still, if it were thought the suspension of the corn-laws for three months would afford any material relief to the people of Ireland, if such a measure were proposed by Irish members, or by the English Government at the dictation of Irish members, it would receive the cordial support of himself and his friends. He expressed his conviction of the necessity of introducing a better system of poor-laws in Ireland, and of awarding out-door relief to the pauper population of that country. He recollects that, in 1833, one million was granted to the starving Protestant clergy of Ireland. If then we could make a gift of one million virtually to the tithe-payers of Ireland, could we not now break through the rigid rules of public economy, and send money to meet the immediate wants of the people of Ireland? Again and again must he press upon the consideration of Parliament the propriety of introducing the English system of Poor Laws, or something like it, into Ireland. Twenty years ago he had the honour of serving as private secretary to Mr. Canning; and repeatedly had Mr. Canning declared to him his conviction that it was owing to the English system of poor laws, that England, amid all the difficulties of foreign war and domestic sedition, had been saved from the horrors of revolution.

Mr. E. B. ROCHE had never listened to any speech with greater pleasure than to Lord George Bentinck's; it was full of hope for Ireland.

Sir JAMES GRAHAM explained the mode which the Government had adopted in giving relief to the Irish peasantry, and trusted that the landed proprietors would see the necessity of co-operating with them.

A desultory but interesting conversation then ensued, on the conduct of the landlords of Ireland at the present crisis. Mr. O'CONNELL, and nearly every Irish member who took part in the debate, to the number of ten or twelve, admitted that the time had come when that experiment (if it is to be called one) must be tried in Ireland, which on this side of the water has been for two or three hundred years past so successful in keeping up the standard of maintenance among the labouring classes of this country, in securing their allegiance to its laws and institutions, in drawing forth their industrial energies, and affording that perfect security for life and property, and for the enjoyment of the fruits of industry, which is the first condition for its full development.

Mr. S. CRAWFORD expressed his delight that the house was at last becoming a convert to the doctrine which he had so long propounded, that it was necessary to tax the landlords of Ireland for the support of the poor. He recommended his friends from Ireland not to protract the discussion on the Coercion Bill longer than was fairly necessary, as the delay which had already taken place in passing the corn-law had been productive of great embarrassment to the commercial interests of the country.

Mr. COBDEN returned to the Smith O'Brien and Bentinck correspondence. The unexpected and irregular debate originated in a question put by the honourable member for Limerick to the noble lord the member for Lynn, which, it seems, has arisen out of a private communication between them. But there is another position before the House and the public—not to suspend, but to abolish the corn-law; and he supposed that Mr. Smith O'Brien was anxious to substitute a three-months' suspension for Ireland instead of general abolition:

But there are other parties to be consulted with regard to such a proposition—the people of England [cheers, and ironical cheers from the Protectionists]—I don't mean the country party, but the people living in the towns, and who will govern this country [loud cheers]. I tell him, that the English people, and the Scotch, and the Welsh, and I believe the Irish too, are determined not to be content with a suspension, but to have a total abolition of the corn-law [cheers]. I think, therefore, the matter is taken out of the hands of this House altogether.

Were it not for the inconvenience that would arise to the trade of the country and to the private business of the House, he felt anxious, when he heard such speeches as emanated from the gentlemen opposite, that an appeal were made at once to the country; for the country would make an example of honourable gentlemen below the gangway which they little anticipate.

In reply to a question from Mr. SMITH O'BRIEN, Sir ROBERT PEEL declared that he would not accept the proposition to suspend the corn-laws, as regards Ireland, for three months, as a substitute for his own measures.

Mr. D'ISRAELI replied with some warmth to the speech of Mr. Cobden. That gentleman had treated the House with a definition of what he meant by the people of England, and had then threatened the country party with its reprobation. They had been told, that the people of England were those who lived in towns; and that definition had been loudly cheered and accepted by the First Minister of the Crown:—

I repeat it, that the right honourable gentlemen immediately cheered that definition of "the people." The cheer came from the same right honourable gentleman who once was so proud of being the head of the gentlemen of England.

Sir ROBERT PEEL: I totally deny it [loud cheers].

Mr. D'ISRAELI: The right honourable gentleman totally denies it. If he means to say that anything I stated is false, of course I sit down.

[A mock motion of adjournment was made by Mr. MAURICE O'CONNELL, to enable Mr. SMITH O'BRIEN to make a second speech.]

Mr. NEWDEGATE proceeded to interrogate Sir Robert Peel as to whether he stated, that an assertion made by an honourable member in his place was false?

Sir ROBERT PEEL explained what he had said in reference to the imputation of cheering a particular expression:—

What I said of the imputation was, that I totally deny it. The honourable Member for Shrewsbury said, that I had cheered a particular expression of the honourable Member for Stockport—namely, that the towns had a right to dictate to the Country party, and that I accepted his definition of the word "people." I said, I totally deny it.

Mr. PETER BORTHWICK regretted that Sir Robert Peel did not take the opportunity of Mr. D'Israeli's sitting down to make the statement he had now done [oh, oh!] Major MACNAMARA thought the explanation sufficient. Lord GEORGE BENTINCK remarked that there was obviously some mistake: he hoped there would be an end of any feeling on the subject.

Sir JAMES GRAHAM had sat next Sir Robert Peel, and was consequently in the best position for knowing what passed. He had himself cheered some of the sentiments which fell from Mr. Cobden, particularly the remark that the people had settled the question of the corn-laws long ago. Sir James did not cheer what Mr. Cobden said about the people in towns—he held a different opinion; and he was quite sure that Sir Robert Peel did not cheer either.

Further evidence for the cheer was given, according to the *Times*, by Mr. WILLIAM MILES and Mr. H. HINDE; against it, by Mr. S. WORTLEY, Mr. BROTHERTON, and Mr. M. CORBALLY. Weighing the evidence, Mr. D'ISRAELI admitted that he must have been mistaken. Sir ROBERT PEEL reassured him that he was; and the scene closed with "cheers."

The adjourned debate was then entered upon by

Mr. JOHN O'CONNELL, whose speech occupied three hours and a half in delivery. He controverted at some length the proposition of Mr. P. Scrope, for introducing into Ireland a system of poor-laws founded on the same principles as those of England. He was opposed not only to the extension, but also to the permanent existence, of the poor-laws at present in force in Ireland. He did not agree with those of his friends who preferred the offers of Lord G. Bentinck to those of Sir R. Peel; for Lord George would give Ireland a coercion bill like Sir R. Peel, but would not, like him, give it a permanent free-trade in corn. The hon. gentleman then pointed out the extent of the distress which at present prevailed in Ireland, and called upon Government to come forward without delay and arrest the progress of famine and disease.

Mr. M'CARTHY moved the adjournment of the debate, and, after some discussion, the motion was agreed to, and the house adjourned at half-past one o'clock.

The debate was resumed on Monday night by Mr. M'CARTHY, who declared his intention of giving every opposition to the bill.

Mr. BAILLIE contended that Government had made out a convincing case for the passing of this bill.

Colonel VERNER defended the landlords of Ireland in general, but more particularly the landlords of Ulster, from the charges and imputations which had been cast upon them in the course of the present debate. Supposing, however, that some of them had acted with undue severity, was that any palliation for the numerous murders which had been committed? The course which he would adopt towards Ireland was very different from that recommended by her Majesty's Ministers. He would put down with a strong hand agitation and agitators, and every species of association which kept the people discontented and disunited. He would also put an end to all mischievous conciliation and to all uncalculated concession; for he had observed that every concession to the repeal party had been attended by fresh insults to and by fresh demands from the Imperial Parliament.

Mr. HAWES contended that nothing could justify this bill except a pressing and overwhelming necessity. He showed that the undetected crimes committed in Ireland were fewer now than they had been in former times. There had been a decrease of 28 per cent. in the amount of murders committed, and of 53½ per cent.

in the amount of the attempts at murder in 1845, as compared with the year 1844. Trouble and discontent had tracked every coercion bill which had been presented to Parliament from the first down to the present hour, and would continue to track them so long as such miserable instruments were employed for Government. On the one hand he implored the Irish members to shorten the debate on this bill, and by so doing to rally round them the sympathies of English members; and on the other, he implored the Government, in consideration of the state, not only of public feeling, but also of public business, to withdraw this bill, which had encountered, and would encounter, such opposition as had robbed, and would rob it of all that great moral effect which Sir J. Graham expected it to produce in Ireland. He impressed upon the Government the propriety of considering whether it would not be much more conducive to its interests to discuss the expediency of remedial measures for Ireland, than to discuss the necessity of coercive measures for its punishment.

Sir R. PAUL refused to consider the question whether the Administration would acquire more popularity by abandoning this bill than by proceeding with it; for popularity would be gained at too costly a sacrifice if it were attended by greater danger to the life and property of her Majesty's loyal subjects. On the very first day of the session one of the first practical measures recommended to the House in her Majesty's speech was a measure calculated to give increased protection to life, and to bring to justice the perpetrators of deliberate assassination. There was an assurance given by the House in return, that it was deeply impressed with the importance of the subject, and that it would take it into immediate consideration. The bill was then brought in and passed with little opposition in the House of Lords. It was then sent down to that House, and it had hitherto been the invariable practice of the House to give a bill so introduced a first reading. He did not contest the right to oppose the first stage of such a measure; he was only considering whether the Government would have been justified in letting a bill of such importance as the present lie upon the table without further notice. He then spoke of the injurious rumours circulated about the Government, with regard to their corn-bill:—

Sir, I will now allude to an injurious surmise which I have heard thrown out, that her Majesty's Government are indifferent to the progress of the Corn Bill, and that they interposed this discussion, or rather the motion for the first reading of this bill, with a view to the defeat or the delay of this measure [hear]. I have heard some hon. gentlemen say, not that they thought so themselves, but that such was the impression on the part of the public. Sir, in answer to that statement I will only say, without any unnecessary boast, that I shall be prepared to give whatever proof may be required [cheers] of the sincerity of my intentions [cheers]. It is sufficient for me now to say, that the progress of the discussion, the lapse of time, and intervening events, have more strongly increased the feeling with which I spoke when I proposed the permanent and final settlement of the corn question [hear, hear]. I will not deny that, during the debates on the question, my opinions on the subject have undergone a change, and it is this—that restrictions which I at first believed to be *impolitic*, I now believe to be *wyjust* [cheers]. Consequently, the sense of their injustice precludes any compromise on my part [cheers]. That which I have proposed, both as to the amount of duty and as to the continuance of that duty, is all I am able to offer; and, in answer to those injurious suspicions, I think it enough to say, that I shall be perfectly ready to testify, by any public act, the sincerity of my intentions [cheers].

He then proceeded to an explanation of the reasons which had induced the Government to propose a measure of this harsh character towards Ireland. It had been stated that the Government, before it called on the House to assent to such a measure, was bound to establish three facts—first, that from the extent, frequency, and nature of the crimes, a necessity for a change in the law existed; secondly, that all the powers of the existing law had been exerted and exhausted; and thirdly, that there was a rational hope that the particular measure, at variance as it was with the ordinary principles of law, would be effectual for its object. He then proceeded to controvert the statistics of Mr. Hawes on the first of these three points; but at the same time contended that the question did not so much turn upon the increase in the amount of crimes as upon their character, their impunity, and the danger of their becoming contagious. He did not know where Mr. Hawes had got his returns; but from those in his possession, which he read to the House, it appeared that there had been in the last twelve months a great increase in the amount of the various crimes against life and property in certain districts in Ireland. Having made out a strong case, in the character and frequency of the crimes endangering the life of the subject and the peace of the country, for the adoption of measures of extraordinary precaution, he next proceeded to show that special commissions were of little or no use, unless you were prepared to produce evidence which would ensure conviction. He then grappled with the third point, "Would this bill be efficacious for its object?" and in so doing admitted that, if it would not be so, it was not to be justified by the frequency of its repetition. He had been told that in pressing it now upon the House he was disregarding the wishes of the representatives of Ireland. He had been much surprised at that assertion, for he found that in 1835 the representatives of Ireland had consented to a measure similar to the present, and had allowed it to remain on the statute book for five years without the slightest remonstrance. During all that period Lord Normanby had been in office as Lord-lieutenant of Ireland; and as Mr. Hawes had referred to his administration as a proof that, owing to his conciliatory measures, a diminution had taken place in the amount of crime, he might be permitted to refer to it too as a proof of the efficacy of the present measure. He then proceeded to justify in detail the various clauses of the bill, and to show that they were even more necessary for the protection of the poor than for the protection of the rich.

He believed that when the bill was once passed, the knowledge of its existence would almost operate as a cure of the present disorders. He believed that now, as formerly, its dormant energies would be sufficient for the repression of crime, and that the publicity

given to its powers would enable the executive to dispense with the exercise of them at an early period. It would be delusive to propose this measure as a panacea for the disorders and grievances of Ireland, and he therefore at once admitted that it was an unmuted evil, and no remedy for them. He refused to discuss, on the present occasion, the various measures which had been proposed for the permanent relief of Ireland, for each of them deserved a separate discussion. With regard to the introduction of the principle of the English poor-law into Ireland, he observed that there were many reasons which ought to induce the House to pause before it adopted in Ireland the principle that the unemployed poor had a right to relief from the land. They ought not hastily to grant the poor of Ireland such an indefensible claim without looking at all the social relations of that country; for they might be holding out a permanent incentive to indolence, instead of affording a temporary relief to unemployed and destitute industry. In no country was the maintenance of the great principles of property of more importance than it was in Ireland; but he must confess that the manner in which great numbers of the tenantry were evicted in that country struck him with the deepest and most anxious regret. It was very easy to say, "Introduce a landlord and tenant bill;" but it was not so easy to introduce a well-digested measure on that subject. For instance, the bill of Mr. S. Crawford would compel the landlord to give compensation to the outgoing tenant for the improvements made on his farm; but it would not control the power of the landlord to evict a pauper tenant, who had made no improvement on his property. He would tell the members and landlords of Ireland that he thought that they relied too much on the assistance of the executive Government, and too little upon themselves:—

You (continued the right hon. baronet, addressing the Irish members on the Opposition benches) may rather distrust the disposition of an Englishman towards Ireland; but, after an official residence of six years in that country, I left it with a most sincere desire for its wealth and prosperity [hear, hear]. You will excuse me if I speak with freedom when I say that I think you are apt to rely too much upon the power of the executive Government [hear, hear]. You are always saying that the Government ought to act; that the legislature ought to pass new laws. Believe me that you, the landlords of Ireland, have it in your own power to do more immediate good to your country than can be conferred by the legislature [hear, hear]. If you would meet together—I speak of absentees as well as of resident proprietors—and seriously consider what are the real evils of your country, and what are the obligations imposed upon you as possessors of property [hear, hear]. If those who are armed with legal power, who eject their tenantry without considering how they are to obtain shelter and subsistence, would reflect on the consequences of such an exercise of their power [hear, hear]; and if the exertion of this power be necessary, if they would maturely consider the duty imposed on them of providing in some measure against the dreadful consequences of such a course, which a very little liberality and forbearance would enable them to do [hear], you would confer greater benefit on your country than the Government or legislation could effect.

He called upon them to follow the example of Lord G. Hill, who had converted 18,000 acres of waste land into a valuable property, and who, by a constant attention to his duties as a landlord, had conciliated to himself the good-will of those who stood to him in the relation of tenants. By such conduct they would draw together the relations of rich and poor, and would ensure a confidence in the impartial administration of justice which could not be accomplished by any direct efforts of legislation. There were obligations on property which laws could not instil or control, but which were essential to the good order and maintenance of society. In conclusion, he gave the Irish members a gentle hint of the public inconvenience which was accruing from their continued prolongation of this debate.

Mr. WYSE protested against the measure, because it would neither redress the grievances nor repress the crimes of Ireland. He was sorry to find that the Government was still determined to give nothing but coercive measures to Ireland.

Colonel CONOLLY had been instructed by the grand jury of Donegal to support this bill, and had great pleasure on his own account in obeying their instruction.

Mr. RICH opposed the bill.

On the motion of Mr. P. SOMERS the debate was then adjourned to Thursday next.

COUNTY ELECTIONS.

On Wednesday, Mr. ELPHINSTONE moved the second reading of his bill for limiting the voting at county elections to one day.

Colonel THOMAS WOOD believed that any such restriction would be productive of very serious consequences, and he moved as an amendment, that the bill be read that day six months.

Lord WORSLY read a return of the number of votes recorded at certain county elections in 1841, with the view of showing that a very large proportion of the voters polled on the first day. At the last contested election for the West Riding of Yorkshire, 49,782 votes in all were recorded; of which 41,499 were given on the first day, and only 8,283 the second; and so in other cases. The majority was so great on the first day at that election for the successful candidates, that there was no chance of altering the result on the second. Yet the chance of turning an election on the second day offered strong temptations to partisans; and not only would corrupt practices be checked, but the expense of elections would be considerably diminished, by the adoption of the present measure. He was aware, also, of some instances in which voters, from their ignorance of the law, thought that, after having recorded their votes on the first day of an election for one candidate, they were entitled to vote for the other candidate on the next. The bill would prevent such mistakes.

Mr. NEWDEGATE spoke in opposition to the bill; Mr. BRIGHT in its favour; Mr. B. DENISON, Sir JAMES GRAHAM, and Sir ROBERT INGLIS, against; Mr. B. ESCOTT in favour; Lord GEORGE BENTINCK against.

Mr. NEWDEGATE thought the events or the returns of past county elections afforded no criterion of what

might be the events at future ones; and he suggested, that in the present condition of railway travelling, whilst a number of county voters might be assembled at a railway station, the persons in the employment of the Anti-corn-law League might occupy their places at the polling-booths.

Mr. BRIGHT believed that nine-tenths of the county voters are in favour of the change.

Sir JAMES GRAHAM would oppose the bill; believing that it was calculated to abridge the latitude which ought to be afforded to county voters to go to the poll. He did not see any analogy between the cases of borough and county elections. He had been quite surprised by the enumeration of counties given by Lord Worsley; not because it showed that so few, but that it proved that so many voters polled on the second day. Besides, many persons had votes in two, three, four, or more counties; and with these the exercise of their franchise under this bill would be impossible. This fact alone established the importance of continuing the election in counties for two days. He could not imagine how it happened that those who were for increasing county constituencies by the addition of out-voters—for so it must be accomplished—support this bill, since the effect of it must be to prevent them, in many instances, from going to the poll. At the same time, he was in favour of enlarging the constituencies in all cases where it was not done by absolute faggot-votes.

Mr. B. ESCOTT wished to promote the purity of elections; and as most of the bad practices and bribery took place on the second day, he should vote for the second reading. This was not a very important measure, but it was a fair step in the right direction. The way to raise the character of the House was to raise the character of its members.

Colonel SINTHORP had votes for five counties, and was anxious to exercise his right in every county. People talked of a paltry economy, and he regretted the departure of the time when there was a free circulation of money at elections.

Lord GEORGE BENTINCK hoped, that when the honourable member for Winchester next divided on the corn-laws, he would remember the promise he had once made to his constituents, and not vote one way and promise another. To do so, was to imitate some poor voters at elections, who, having promised one candidate, polled for another.

Mr. ESCOTT rejoined. Ignorance was generally accompanied by presumption: the noble lord was ignorant of what had recently passed at Winchester.

The House divided—For the bill, 32; against it 55. Thus the bill was lost.

HOW TO DEAL WITH BRIBERY.

The Bridport election committee reported to the House of Commons on Monday evening that Mr. Cochrane had been wrongfully returned, in consequence of the transfer of one vote.

Mr. CHRISTIE subsequently asked whether it was the intention of the committee appointed to try the Bridport election petition to institute any inquiry as to the circumstances under which the charges of bribery alleged in the petition had been abandoned [no less than ninety-six having been objected to on that ground]; or to consider the propriety of recommending the House to make some further inquiry on the subject? He (Mr. Christie) might be permitted to state, that Bridport was one of those places which gave rise to the controversies that led to the adoption of the bill introduced by the noble lord opposite (Lord J. Russell).

Mr. C. WOOD, the chairman of the committee, thought they had gone far enough.

Mr. BANKES wished to ask the members of the committee whether they had not decided a point which was not contained in the record? He had read over the petition, and he did not find any allegations relative to a scrutiny—any assertion that a vote tendered for one candidate had been entered as for the other. This was, he understood, the point upon which the committee had unseated Mr. Cochrane. He should, therefore, on Tuesday move that the proceedings of the committee be printed, before Mr. Romilly be allowed to replace Mr. Cochrane as the representative for Bridport.

Sir G. GREY and Lord JOHN MANNERS deprecated further inquiry.

Mr. BRIGHT called attention to the case of Wigan. With regard to that borough nothing had been done by the committee, and nothing apparently could be done to bring to justice any of the parties connected with the very disgraceful proceedings of that borough. This was the case also in the present instance. Nothing had been done, or was proposed to be done, to bring to justice the parties who were alleged to have committed bribery at Bridport. Now, unless something was done to put a stop to proceedings of this nature, the elections for many of the boroughs, especially in England, would be little better than farces.

Mr. COLETT understood that since the termination of the election committee, writs had been issued against the late member for Bridport, for the recovery of penalties to the amount of £7,000 for bribery.

The SPEAKER here interposed, and put a stop to further discussion as irregular.

EVICTIONS IN IRELAND.

On Monday night, on the motion for resuming the adjourned debate on the first reading of the Protection of Life (Ireland) Bill,

Major BERESFORD availed himself of the opportunity to reply to a statement made on Friday last by Mr. J. O'CONNELL, relative to certain evictions from the estate of his noble relative the Marquis of Waterford. His explanation was as follows:—He asserted that not one tenant and that not one cottier had been ejected from the estates. Some persons who squatted on the property had been removed from it, but not an angry word had been used on the occasion; on the contrary, after they had received the compensation which the Marquis of Waterford offered them, other individuals in the same situation expressed their readiness to pull down their own houses, if the same compensation were paid to them. So ruthless, then, had been the extermination practised by the Marquis of Waterford, that, strange to say, many persons who had witnessed it had requested to be placed in the same "exterminated" condition. His noble relative lived

nine months in every year upon his property, and spent there a large income; and the charities of his noble consort were also very large, though unostentatious; and yet such a nobleman had been denounced as a "ruthless invader" in the land of his fathers.

Mr. J. O'CONNELL expressed his gratification at hearing the statement of Major Beresford. He had heard individuals in Ireland, the most opposed in politics to the noble marquis, express a wish that there were many landlords in Ireland like him. He had likewise heard, that the burning of the marquis's stables was the act of a refractory servant, and had been much lamented by all the peasantry on his estates. He then expressed his great sorrow at having given additional notoriety to a charge which he now believed to be without any foundation.

Mr. O'CONNELL bore willing testimony to the merits of the Marquis of Waterford as a resident landlord, and also to the charitable disposition of his most excellent lady, the marchioness. The Marquis of Waterford was one of the best landlords in Ireland, and was as safe in any part of that country as he would be in that House. His tenantry were happy in such a landlord.

MISCELLANEOUS.

On Wednesday leave was given to Mr. S. CRAWFORD to bring in a bill for the protection and relief of ejected tenants in Ireland.

FRIENDLY SOCIETIES BILL.—On the same day, on the motion of Sir J. GRAHAM, the House resolved itself into a committee for the further consideration of the report on the Friendly Societies' Bill. Some conversation took place on the first and second clauses of the bill, and several suggestions offered by hon. members were incorporated into them. On the third clause Mr. T. DUNCOMBE proposed an amendment, of which the effect was to legalise all friendly societies at present established. Sir J. GRAHAM objected to this amendment, and, after some conversation, it was negatived by a majority of ninety-three over seven voices. Several verbal amendments were then made in the bill, which was considered up to clause 15. The House then resumed, the chairman reported progress, and the bill was ordered to be re-committed on Friday next.

NEW WRIT.—On the motion of Mr. YOUNG, a new writ was ordered for the Linlithgow district of burghs, in the room of Mr. Baird, who has accepted the office of steward of the Chiltern Hundreds.

THE TEA DUTY.—On Thursday, after the presentation of some petitions from Manchester and Liverpool praying for a reduction in the duty on tea, Lord SANDON raised a discussion, by moving for copies of all the memorials which had been addressed to the Government on the subject. Unless a reduction in the duty took place, it was impossible to expect from the open intercourse with China the advantages we hoped to derive from it. He admitted that an increase in the consumption had taken place, but not to the same extent as had been found in coffee: in the one case the duty had been reduced, in the other it had been raised from an *ad valorem* duty of 150 per cent. to a duty of 250 per cent. He found that the yearly consumption of tea during the past ten years gave an average for the first five years of 30,118,000 pounds, and for the second five years of 39,914,000 pounds; showing that the increase had not been proportioned to the increase of population. The effect of so high a duty not only operated against the comforts of the people, but it obstructed the progress of our trade with China. The trade to that country could not be one of cash, but of barter; and the existence of such a high duty upon tea could not fail to produce an unfriendly feeling towards this country, more especially as the Chinese found that England was the only country in the world which imposed a heavy duty on their produce. If the duty were reduced, there would be a greater demand for sugar, and this would assist in making up the revenue. Mr. MOFFATT, Mr. J. SMITH, Mr. ENTWISTLE, and Mr. WYSE spoke in favour of reduction. The CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER had no objection to produce the papers; but he did not think it was consistent with his public duty at present to say what were the intentions of Government. It should be recollect that the revenue on tea was very little short of five millions. The state of the general revenue did not admit of a large reduction, and the benefit of a small reduction would not go to the consumer.

CHARITABLE TRUSTS BILL.—On Monday night Sir G. GREY complained of the delay in proceeding with this bill. It had been laid on the table of the House of Lords some weeks ago, and nevertheless the second reading of it had not yet been moved:—

He wished to know whether it was the intention of the Government to proceed with the Charitable Trusts Bill in the other House, or to abandon it for the present session?

Sir J. GRAHAM said, that he had had an opportunity of conferring with the Lord Chancellor that day, and he could state that it was the intention of the noble and learned lord to proceed with the bill.

Sir G. GREY: Without delay?

Sir J. GRAHAM: The noble and learned lord assured me that it was his intention to proceed with the bill.

Mr. SMITH O'BRIEN has been ordered to attend the railway committee on which his name appears. This motion was carried on Monday night, when the hon. member at first said he would attend under protest, but afterwards declared that as he had been *ordered*, and did not recognise the power to compel him, he should not attend. It remains to be seen whether the House will venture to deliver its contumacious member to the custody of the Sergeant-at-Arms.

CAUTION TO CHARITABLE SOCIETIES.—Sunday was the day appointed for the collection in London at all the Baptist Chapels for their Missionary Society, and at one of these meetings in the evening the abominable trick was played of obtaining nine shillings as change for a half-sovereign at each of the doors, both of the half-sovereigns being afterwards discovered to be counterfeits.

A boy, nine years old, has hanged himself at Shoreditch, because his mother refused to give him a half-penny to buy a ball!

IRELAND.

THE PROGRESS OF DISTRESS AND FAMINE.

Hourly, says the Dublin correspondent of the *Chronicle*, the evidences of utter destitution are increasing. The landed proprietors who have yet contributed at this awful crisis are comparatively few. From all quarters there are complaints of the apathy and selfishness of the owners of the soil. A Quaker merchant, who arrived in town to-day from Clonmel, gave this description of the state of the district:—"The poor are suffering dreadfully, and with patience: the middle classes are acting with great benevolence, but the conduct of the landlords generally is very bad indeed. One of them, who enjoys a well-paid rental of £5,000 a-year, refused to contribute more than £10 to the Relief Fund, and some landed proprietors have not given one shilling." The following are some of the latest accounts from the country:—

FEVER IN KERRY.—There are over one hundred patients in the county fever hospital.—*Kerry Examiner*.

FAMINE SIGNALS.—Wednesday morning three black flags were hoisted upon large poles at the Cross of Cratloe, to indicate the prevailing distress of the neighbourhood. There were many persons collected round, shouting to those in the different vehicles passing, to direct their attention to them.—*Clare Journal*.

NENAGH.—The funds raised by the relief committee for the current month are nearly exhausted. In fact, with the utmost vigilance and care, it is with difficulty the committee have been able to work successfully hitherto; but by the adoption of energetic measures at the next public meeting, which, we believe, is to be held on Wednesday se'nnight, we expect that much good will be accomplished. As we stated in our last publication, the resident and absentee gentry connected with the town and district are doing literally nothing for the town. In the meantime, landlords are proceeding to recover rents according to law.

TOOMAVARA, BALLYMACKEY, &c.—Everything that can be done in these parishes is set on foot by the Catholic and Protestant clergymen and the few resident proprietors. Some of the absentees are flagrant in their conduct. They have not even answered the applications made to them.—*Tipperary Free Press*.

CAUSE OF CRIME IN IRELAND.—It would be difficult to overstate the case as against the landlords of Ireland, as being the causes themselves of the agrarian outrages for the repression of which Sir James Graham's Coercion Bill is intended. The fact, however, admits not of a doubt that, from the unmerciful clearance of estates, proceeded originally that demoralised condition of the peasantry which has made all the institutions of civilised life so insecure in Ireland. It is a common occurrence in Tipperary that a landlord shall let certain acres of waste land to a tenant at a rate, say, of 5s. an acre. The tenant goes in; he builds his little house, and sets in good earnest about reclaiming the land. In five or six years he may have raised the value of the land to 10s., to 20s., to 25s., to 30s. an acre; moreover he shall have paid every gale of rent as it falls due. At the expiration of this time the landlord steps in, asks no questions, and ejects him. The man is turned out on the high road without a shilling, he, his wife, and children, to die of starvation, or beg a handful of potatoes here and there from their neighbours. He takes counsel with his fellows, men similarly situated with himself, all exposed to the hazard of suffering the like injustice. Probably their consultation is held at some wake; the matter is canvassed—the landlord is regularly tried under a kind of system of Breton law, and is condemned to die. An executioner is wanted; a message is sent to Kildare or Queen's County; the man arrives, and the landlord or land-agent is shot—murdered. Now, in a country so situated, where are you to get evidence to convict? The people who are roaming about the roads are, in all probability, aware that the murder is about to take place, and could have pointed out to the landlord, as he drove or rode along, the very bush behind the stone dyke where the assassin was standing in ambush. I certainly believe that you may repress such a system by terror, but it must be by exterminating half the population.—*Special Correspondent of the Chronicle*.

THE CHOLERA.—This destructive scourge of humanity seems once more on its way to ravage the continent of Europe, originating, as before, in the heart of Asia, northern Persia being the first quarter in which it was noticed; it is gradually approaching the confines of Europe. The chief cities of Persia already count by thousands the number of their dead who have fallen victims to Asiatic cholera. The line of route taken by it appears to be almost due west, for it attacked in regular succession the cities of Bokhara, Herat, Meshed, Teheran, and Ispahan, while recent accounts from Odessa state that two or three cases of Asiatic cholera had been observed at Tiflis. Should it continue to advance at its present rate, it may be looked for in Eastern Europe in a very short time. Indeed, it is stated from Riga that it has already broken out at Orenburg and Kasan, that several persons at St. Petersburg have been attacked by the influenza, a disease that usually precedes the cholera; proper precautionary measures ought, therefore, to be taken to check the progress of the cholera in due time; for arriving as it will in the middle of the summer, the season most favourable to its development and propagation, the consequences in the densely crowded towns and cities of the Continent will be awful.—*German Paper*.

ELOPEMENT IN HIGH LIFE.—The *Globe* states that on Friday morning the family of Lord Valentia, of Bletchington-park, near Oxford, was thrown into a state of the greatest excitement by the discovery of the elopement of his Lordship's daughter, the Hon. Nea Ada Arthur Rose d'Amour Annesley. The gentleman with whom she eloped was Hercules G. R. Robinson, Esq., of the 87th Fusiliers. The happy couple were married in London, and proceeded immediately for Ireland.

We understand that the Queen, on the intelligence reaching her of the attempt to assassinate King Louis Philippe, wrote an autograph letter to her dear friend and ally, congratulating his Majesty on his providential escape. This letter was instantly despatched by a special messenger to Paris.—*Observer*.

THE CHARITABLE TRUSTS BILL.

(From the forthcoming number of the *Eclectic Review*.)

We desire to call the particular attention of Dissenters of all classes to the insulting and injurious aspect which this spoliation bill wears towards them and their interests. The Dissenting deputies have already pointed out, in their petition to the House of Lords, that, although in a bill, under the same title, introduced into their lordships' House in 1844, provision was made for excluding from its operation "any funds applicable to the benefit of Roman Catholics, or of the people called Quakers, or of any person of the Jewish persuasion," and for leaving such funds "under the superintendence and control of persons of such persuasions respectively;" and although no petitions have been presented to the Legislature from Protestant Dissenters, praying for any alteration in the law respecting them, yet the legal operation of this bill will be to include all the chapels of Protestant Dissenters, although the greater part of them are supported by voluntary contributions. This is true enough; but a great deal more than this is true. Not only their chapels, but also their colleges and schools, and all their institutions, are placed in jeopardy. We question whether any minister will be safe in his pulpit should this bill pass. It contains a clause which puts every individual having a beneficial interest in a trust estate completely under the thumb, we had almost written thumbscrew, of the commissioners. Certainly it empowers them to declare existing trusts injurious, and wholly to change their complexion and direction. An orthodox trustee may be displaced to make room for a heterodox one—a good Christian for a rank infidel. The Established Church is well provided for; but, for dissent and Dissenters, there is nothing but pains and penalties. Whatever has, for twenty-five years, been deemed to be a Church charity, with that no Dissenter can have anything to do, any more than if it were, by distinct and positive deed, exclusively a Church charity. Here comes in the new text, quoted above, in all its rigour. No Dissenting alderman, town-councillor, or parochial officer, can exercise the rights of citizenship in relation to any of these twenty-five-year-old church charities, much less to those positively such. Far be any Dissenter from wishing to intrude into charities really belonging to Churchmen as such; but there are numberless municipal and parochial charities notoriously designed to be administered without distinction of religious parties, which, nevertheless, under this bill, the church will be enabled to claim; and with them no Dissenter can interfere who is not prepared to forswear himself and his principles, by solemnly declaring that he is "really and *bond fide* a member of the established church." By a strange anomaly, the commissioners' oath of office requires no religious test from them; and, in point of fact, there is every probability that the three classes of religionists whom the present Government has exclusively favoured in former measures, will be represented in the very first board of charity commissioners. We refer, of course, to the church of England, the church of Rome, and the Unitarians. Thus it will come to pass, that, while three commissioners of these several religious persuasions may turn all sorts of trusts, Evangelical dissenting or otherwise, upside down and inside out, a new test act, enacted for the purpose, will for ever prevent any conscientious Dissenter from so much as touching a single charity to which the clergy of the Establishment can set up a specious claim of five-and-twenty years' possession. A more absurd anomaly or a grosser insult was never perpetrated. Will the Legislature establish the system of exclusive dealing by act of Parliament?

* * * * *

All classes of Nonconformists—Protestant or Catholic, Wesleyans, Presbyterians, Independents, Baptists, and others—have equal cause to complain of the unjust partiality, as well as of the oppressive character, of this bill. Why should Oxford and Cambridge be alone exempt? Why should special visitors and bishops taboo Church charities from the profane touch of the commissioners? On what principle should such charities be protected, while Nonconformist trusts are exposed to the unrestricted control of this unconstitutional and irresponsible triumvirate? If a declaration of Churchmanship is demanded from the trustees of Church charities, why should not a declaration of Wesleyanism be required from trustees of Wesleyan chapels—or Independency from those of Independent chapels, and so on? The Toleration Act, and all similar statutes, are a mockery, a delusion, and a snare, unless as much respect be paid by the Legislature to the trust property of all classes of Nonconformists as to that of the Established Church itself. Add to all, the commissioners may, if they choose, exempt all Church charities from the taxing clause of the bill; and, judging from its partial complexion throughout, they probably will.

Happy will it be if the different spirit in which, on this as on many former occasions, it has been proposed to deal with Churchmen and with Dissenters, should wake the latter to a due sense of their danger and a due appreciation of their principles. This perpetual meddling with religious interests, carried further down at every fresh attempt, can be effectually arrested and put down only by the entire separation of the church from the state. This bill ought to be resisted by all classes, because of its unconstitutional, jobbing, vexatious, and mischievous character; but it deserves the strenuous opposition of Dissenters on account of its atrociously sectarian bias; and yet, so long as exclusive privileges are conferred upon a favoured sect, measures equally bad, if not worse, must be expected as the natural fruit of such a vicious system of legislation. "To them that have will be given." The appetite will grow by that it feeds on; and poor human nature will always delight in adding more privileges to those who already enjoy so many. The union of church and state is the animating principle, the life and soul, of this bill. Let it pass, and it will entail a numerous kindred brood. As infallibly as one triumvirate of commissioners has led to more, will this Charitable Trusts Bill, which lays its sacrilegious hands upon every farthing vested in trust, be followed by other bills pleading the precedent for Government interference with popular and voluntary institutions, till at length we shall have no security whatever for doing what we like with our own. Government will utterly consume us; we shall be first worried, and then devoured.

The *fracas* in the House of Commons on Friday night did not terminate there. Colonel Peel sought Mr. D'Israeli, and addressed an observation to him of a nature that induced the member for Shrewsbury to send Lord George Bentinck to Colonel Peel for an explanation. Lord George was referred to the honourable Captain Rous, with whom his lordship had so satisfactory an interview that any further proceeding was deemed wholly unnecessary.—*Globe*.

INTERMENT OF "A MINISTER" OF THE SOCIETY OF FRIENDS.—On Tuesday morning the remains of Mrs. Anne Jones, widow of the late Mr. George Jones, of Stockport, were laid in their last resting-place, in the burial ground of the Society of Friends, Higher Hillgate, in that town. The scene was deeply affecting. Mrs. Jones had, by her benevolence and Christian piety, rendered herself eminently useful as a "minister" among her own people, and was greatly and extensively beloved by all ranks of the community. In works of charity and labours of love she was ever foremost; and the hearts of those who were ready to perish were often cheered and encouraged by her timely and bountiful supplies. On the morning of her interment upwards of a hundred members of the Society of Friends, from Manchester and other places, assembled at the burial-ground, to express by their presence their affectionate regard for the memory of their departed friend. The mode of sepulture adopted by this peaceful and benevolent people is touchingly mournful and impressive from its pure simplicity. When we entered the grave-yard the assemblage was ranged in silent solemnity around the grave. The coffin, plain and devoid of ornament, had been placed by its side. Stillness reigned around, and all parties, young and old, seemed intently contemplating, from the relics of frail mortality before them, the brevity of human life and the vanity of human wishes. The sun shone on the tranquil scene, and rendered more visible the deep thoughts which occupied every heart. In the midst of this silence the voice of a female Friend was heard, pouring forth Christian monition and counsel; and this brief address was followed by one or two others, also from females, in a similar strain. A pause succeeded, when the coffin was lowered into the grave; and after taking of it a last look, the congregation retired to the meeting-house, where they engaged together in Christian worship. Such is the simple yet affecting solemnity that marks the burial of the dead among the Society of Friends.—*Manchester Times*.

THE GLORIOUS UNCERTAINTY OF THE LAW has never been more fully exemplified than in the recent cases of disputed liability, as between railway allottees and Committee men. In the case of *Walstab v. Spottiswoode*, it was laid down, as the law, that an allottee was entitled to recover back from any member of a committee, the full amount of his deposit, in consequence of such committee having abandoned the undertaking, without proceeding to Parliament to obtain an Act. In the subsequent case of *Woolmer and others v. Toby*, it was decided that the committee of an abandoned undertaking were entitled to recover of an allottee defaulter, the full amount of the deposit due upon his allotment of shares, without reference to any ulterior proceedings in connexion with the undertaking. These two decisions, coming close upon each other, were quite sufficient to bewilder and worry shoals of allottees and committee-men, all anxious litigants in perspective; but to render the matter still more uncertain, the verdicts have been set aside, and new trials granted in each case, during the week; and the remarks of the several judges, with the arguments of the counsel, all go to prove that the law, upon the points in dispute, is in that glorious and most unsettled state, which opens a prospect as cheering and profitable to the members of the legal profession, as it will prove gloomy and expensive to the unfortunate litigants.

EXTRAORDINARY MAN-TRAP.—At the borough Court on Monday, Michael Hines was brought up charged with attempting to break into the cellar of a beer-house, kept by Mr. John Jones, Charles-street, Oxford-road. It appeared that he had partly forced one of the boards open of the cellar-shutter, and got his head in, about one o'clock in the morning, when the board sprung back in such a manner that he was caught by the neck in kind of trap of his own making, and could neither get into the cellar nor effect his escape! His cries awoke the landlord, who on going down and hearing the state of the case, thought it was not one which deserved much commiseration, and left him there till a policeman came. When taken out the foolish fellow was black in the face, and would probably soon have forfeited his life. The hearing of the case created much amusement in court. Mr. Maude said the only question with the court was as to whether he intended to rob the house or merely to get at the beer, and he should give him the benefit of the doubt by committing him summarily for three months, instead of sending him for trial.—*Manchester Times*.

DELIVERY OF LETTERS ON THE SABBATH.—Between 300 and 400 inhabitants of Lowestoft have, at the instance of the Vicar, Curate, and Dissenting ministers, signed an authority to the postmaster to defer the delivery of their Sunday letters till the Monday morning, unless there should be some notification on the letter that immediate delivery is indispensable. The effect was that on the following Sunday the labour of the letter-carrier was so diminished as to allow of his attending divine service both morning and afternoon—a privilege unknown to him before for many years.—*Suffolk Chronicle*.

BLACK RAIN.—A most extraordinary storm of black rain fell in the northern part of Worcestershire, on Wednesday last, and excited the greatest alarm. For two hours (from a eleven a.m. to one p.m.) this extraordinary shower lasted, and the pools, watercourses, and even the Severn itself, were completely turned black. The storm extended over Abberley, Dunley, Stourport, and Bewdley, to the great alarm of the inhabitants of those places, the air being during the time completely black. Our informant (says the *Worcestershire Guardian*), who describes the singular phenomenon, states that the rain had a smell as of soot and paint mixed, and that any article dipped into it was blackened. We give this information as we have received it; it is possible that the rain was charged with the sooty impurities of the Dunley coal field, which surrounds the district where the rain fell.

ANNEXATION OF TEXAS.—The Commissioners of the Customs have received a communication from the Foreign-office, stating that the Earl of Aberdeen is of opinion that Texas must henceforward be considered as forming part of the American Union.

GLEANINGS.

General Tom Thumb is about to return to the United States. He has advertised his carriage for sale by private contract.

So low is the Portuguese exchequer that the Duke of Wellington's "good service" pension of £2,000 a year, which has hitherto been regularly paid, cannot at present be provided.

SNUFFERS.—A gentleman once asked the celebrated Abernethy if he thought that the moderate use of snuff would injure the brain? "No, sir," was Abernethy's prompt reply, "for no man with a single ounce of brains would ever think of taking snuff!"

M. Melloni, the celebrated philosopher, has succeeded in settling affirmatively the long-disputed question of heat in the moon's rays.

Twenty rooms in the new Houses of Parliament are to be fitted up immediately for the accommodation of railway committees.

"Concentrated essence of beef and mutton" is amongst the recent imports from Australia; and report speaks favourably of its cheapness and delectability when used for making soup.

The Boston mail steamers resume their fortnightly departure from Boston next month.

Whilst Valentia slate from Kerry is used in the Houses of Parliament for roofing, the projectors of the Roman Catholic Cathedral at Killarney, within forty miles of Valentia, are importing slate from Wales, a distance of six hundred miles.

IMMATURE GENIUS.—No genius, when he feels the feebleness of his first steps, can guess the mighty course he is capable of running at last, by the aid of energetic and long-enduring exercises.—Sir E. Brydges.

From the 1st of January to the 18th of April, 3,000 tickets were issued in London, each entitling seven persons to view the state apartments at Windsor.

THE LADIES' CLUB.—A new club will, it is announced, be opened in May, which will possess amongst other novelties, "a separate dining and refreshment room for the exclusive use of the ladies and families of the members and their friends."

PARLIAMENTARY FURLoughS.—Several members of Parliament have availed themselves of the debate on the corn-laws for the purpose of travelling. One hon. gentleman, who has a taste for military adventures, has gone over to India, having left directions with his servant, that he is to be sent for as soon as there is the most distant prospect of a division on the third reading.—*Punch*.

ELECTION INTELLIGENCE.—Alderman Gibbs has presented to himself a valuable snuff-box, as a slight testimonial of his esteem, in honour of his having elected himself churchwarden of Walbrook. After the election, Alderman Gibbs invited the churchwarden to dinner.—*Punch*.

THE NUTRITIVE PROPERTIES OF INDIAN CORN COMPARED WITH THOSE OF THE POTATO.—Proportion of nutrition in one hundred parts of potatoes, twenty-four; proportion of ditto in Indian corn, eighty-eight. Proportion of water in one hundred parts of potatoes, seventy-two; proportion ditto in Indian corn, nine.

PETER PARLEY IN NEW ORLEANS.—All the public schools in New Orleans, the members of the People's Lyceum, and the citizens generally, paid their respects to Mr. S. C. Goodrich, the author of Peter Parley's books, during his stay in that city on the 28th ult. The *Delta* states that the schools were closed for the day, by request of the mayor and recorders of the various municipalities, to enable the teachers and scholars to call on Mr. Goodrich. We are gratified to see this public mark of esteem bestowed upon one of our best authors.—*American Paper*.

MINIATURE NEWSPAPER.—We have seen a copy of what we believe to be the smallest newspaper in the country. It is named the *Pittenweem Register*, and consists of a single slip about thirteen inches long, and of the breadth of a newspaper column, containing ten small paragraphs connected with the locality in which it is printed. The object of the publication is to furnish the inhabitants of Pittenweem and its vicinity with a brief account of the various incidents that occur in the district, for the purpose of transmitting these to friends or natives of the town, who may be residing at a distance, without the labour of writing them in detail in a letter. It is published weekly, and has now been in existence more than a year.—*Scotsman*.

A MUSICAL BED.—The last novelty from Germany is a musical bed, which receives the weary body and immediately "lays it in Elysium." It is an invention of a mechanician in Bohemia, and is so constructed that by means of hidden mechanism, pressure upon the bed causes a soft and gentle air of Auber to be played, which continues long enough to lull the most wakeful to sleep. At the head is a clock, the hand of which being placed at the hour of the wishes to rise, when the time arrives, the bed plays a march of Spontini, with drums and cymbals, and, in short, with noise enough to rouse the seven sleepers. This unique bed becomes, therefore, the *ne plus ultra* for the wakeful as well as the sluggish.

BIRTHS.

April 21, at Oakwood, near Stockport, the lady of LAWRENCE HENWORTH, Esq., of a son.

April 22, the wife of Mr. JACOB UNWIN, Bucklersbury, of a son.

MARRIAGES.

April 14, at Heaton chapel, near Stockport, Mr. ROBERT HIGGINTON, farmer and cattle dealer, of Lane Side, Rowarth, to RACHEL BENNETT, of Hayfield. After a long and unweared courtship of forty-four years, the parties came to the conclusion of being joined together in the holy baus of matrimony. Their united ages number upwards of 134 years.

April 15, at Hoxton Academy chapel, by J. Campbell, D.D., Mr. JOHN FOREMAN, late secretary of the Greenwich, &c. Sunday School Union, to Miss MARY WHITNEY, of Deptford; being about to sail to British Guiana, to take charge of the Mission School at New Amsterdam, Berbice.

April 16, at the Independent chapel, Stalybridge, by Mr. F. C. Dowthwaite, Mr. SAMUEL HILL, to Miss HARRISON, both of Stalybridge.

April 20, at the Baptist chapel, Wotton-under-Edge, by Mr. John Watts, JOHN PICK, to MARY ANN FOWLER, of Wortley, in the parish of Wotton; being the eightieth marriage solemnised in that town since the passing of the act.

April 22, at Misericordia chapel, by Edward Steane, D.D., HENRY, eldest son of Henry STURT, Esq., of Clapham-common, to ALICE BOOTH, eldest daughter of Leader STEPHENSON, Esq., of Vanbrugh-fields, Blackheath.

DEATHS.

April 16, at Leven, near Beverley, of disease of the heart, Dr. W. B. TOASE, eldest son of Mr. W. Toase, of Paris, minister.

April 18, at Glebelands, Merthyr Tydfil, aged 84, Mrs. MARIA JENKYN, the mother of Dr. Jenkyn, of Coward College. She died full of faith and full of peace.

April 19, in the 53rd year of her age, THERESA SARAH, wife of Mr. William MAYHOUCE, of Fetter-lane-row, St. Paul's, and Gibson-square, Islington.

April 21, at Cheapside, in his 72nd year, THOMAS TREGG, Esq., the eminent bookseller and publisher; and on the following day, Mr. ALFRED B. TREGG, the youngest son of the above, in his 19th year.

April 22, Mr. WILLIAM PAXON, of Gray's-inn-terrace, London, after a severe and protracted illness, aged 57.

April 22, EDITH ELIZABETH LYDON, infant daughter of R. H. ROLLS, Esq., solicitor and clerk of the peace, Calthorpe-terrace, Banbury, aged four months.

April 23, at Tyndall-place, Islington, Mr. JOHN CHEAP, aged 59.

April 23, at Ladbrooke Villas, near Notting-hill, DANEDSON COATES, Esq., Secretary of the Church Missionary Society, in his 68th year.

TRADE AND COMMERCE.

Friday, April 24.

BANKRUPTS.

BENSLY, BENJAMIN, Woking, Surrey, printer, May 5, June 9: solicitors, Mr. Nicholls, Monmouth; and Mr. Bridges, Bristol.

BONE, ROBERT, Durham, grocer, May 4, June 12: solicitors, Messrs. Crosby and Compton, Church-court, Old Jewry; Mr. Thompson, Durham; and Mr. Hoyle, Newcastle-upon-Tyne.

BUCKWORTH, THOMAS, Nottingham, mercer, May 8, June 13: solicitors, Messrs. Sale and Worthington, Manchester; and Messrs. Mottram and Knowles, Birmingham.

BUTTRY, JAMES, Manchester, commission agent, May 6, June 10: solicitors, Messrs. Gregory, Faulkner, Gregory, and Skirrow, Bedford-row; and Messrs. Hampson and Son, Manchester.

CHAMBERLAIN, WILLIAM, East Dereham, Norfolk, grocer, May 5, June 5: solicitors, Mr. Storey, Gray's Inn-place; and Mr. Gillman, Norwich.

CLIFFORD, EDWARD, Minster, Kent, victualler, May 2, May 30: solicitors, Messrs. Butterfield and Venour, Gray's Inn-square.

DRACON, THOMAS ELISHA, and DAY, FREDERICK, Hemel Hempstead, common brewers, May 7, June 11: solicitor, Mr. Gresham, Castle-street, Holborn.

JACKSON, THOMAS, Halifax, worsted spinner, May 5 and 25: solicitors, Messrs. Jacques and Co., Ely-place; Messrs. Stocks and Macauley, Halifax; and Mr. Courtenay, Leeds.

KLEFT, PHILIP, South-street, Manchester-square, cheesemonger, April 30, May 30: solicitor, Mr. Spiller, Camomile-street, Bishops-gate-street.

MILLER, WILLIAM, Manchester, manufacturer, May 7 and 28: solicitors, Messrs. Gregory, Faulkner, Gregory, and Skirrow, Bedford-row; and Mr. Cooper, Manchester.

WILLIAMS, THOMAS, Fenchurch-street, merchant, May 1, June 5: solicitor, Mr. Peile, Great Winchester-street.

WILSON, WILLIAM HENRY, and VAUSE, RICHARD, Kingston-upon-Hull, merchants, May 6 and 27: solicitors, Mr. Hick, Gray's Inn; and Messrs. Holden and Son, Hull.

SCOTCH SEQUESTRATIONS.

M'LEAY, Fortrose, Ross-shire, merchant, May 1 and 22.

MURRAY, JOSEPH, and STEWART, ROBERT, Paisley, publishers, April 28, May 20.

DIVIDENDS.

Mark Israel Jacobs, Ashton-under-Lyne, tailor, first div. of 2s. 7d.; 3s., George-street, Manchester, any Tuesday—William Farren, 56, Farrington-street, licensed victualler, div. of 6d.; 1, Sambrook-court, Basinghall-street, any Friday—John Kent, Stow-market, beer brewer, div. of 5d.; 1, Sambrook-court, Basinghall-street, any Friday—Samuel Culien, Nottingham, chemist, first div. of 3s.; 7, Waterloo-street, Birmingham, any Friday—Charles George Webb, Long-lane, Bermondsey, woolstapler, third div. of 7d.; 2s., Coleman-street, any Wednesday—Wilson Wood and John Holmes, Maidstone, tea dealers, first div. of 1s. 5d.; 2s., Coleman-street, any Wednesday.

Tuesday, April 28.

The following buildings are certified as places duly registered for solemnising marriages, pursuant to an act of the 6th and 7th William IV., c. 85:—

Saint Winifred's chapel, Sheepshed, Leicestershire.
Independent chapel, Pinchbeck, Lincolnshire.
Zion chapel, Park-street, Worcestershire.

BANKRUPTCY ANNULLED.

QUARTON, JOSEPH, Stamford-bridge, Yorkshire, grocer.

BANKRUPTS.

BIRCHALL, ALFRED, Manchester, sharebroker, May 14, June 11: solicitors, Messrs. Reed and Langford, Friday-street, Cheapside, London; and Messrs. Sale and Co., Manchester.

BOND, CHARLES JOHN, Blackheath, Kent, tailor, May 8, June 12: solicitor, Mr. Engleheart, Great Knight Rider-street, Doctors'-commons.

CREWDSON, THOMAS, Liverpool, stockbroker, May 7, 29: solicitors, Messrs. Gregory and Co., Bedford-row, London, and Mr. Charles Green, Liverpool.

HAMPSON, JAMES, iron founder, May 14, June 11: solicitors, Mr. James Coppock, Cleveland-row, St. James's-square, London, and Messrs. Coppock and Woollam, Stockport.

HILL, EDWARD, Stourport, Worcestershire, hosier, May 11, June 8: solicitors, Messrs. Pritchard and Ingram, Stourport; and Mr. John Rawlins, Birmingham.

HUGHES, OWEN, now or late of Holyhead, Carnarvonshire, linen-draper, May 15, 29: solicitors, Messrs. Sweeting and Byrne, Southampton buildings, Chancery-lane, London; Mr. William Lloyd Roberts, Carnarvon; and Messrs. Curry and Co., Liverpool.

LAWES, JAMES, 53, Broad-street, Golden-square, grocer, May 12, June 9: solicitor, Mr. Adam Burn, Great Carter-lane, Doctors'-commons.

LEATHER, GEORGE, and WARDLE, CHARLES WETHERELL, Holbeck, Yorkshire, earthenware manufacturers, May 14, June 18: solicitors, Messrs. Sudlow and Co., 20, Chancery-lane, London; and Mr. John Shackleton, Leeds.

PARSONS, JOHN, Wolverhampton, edge-tool manufacturer, May 8, June 13: solicitors, Messrs. Mottram and Knowles, Birmingham.

PERRY, WILLIAM, Wolverhampton, ironfounder, May 9, June 6: solicitors, Messrs. Bennett and Thorne, Wolverhampton.

PULLING, CHARLES, of Tooley-street, and 11, Trinity-square, Southwark, potato salesman, May 12, June 9: solicitors, Messrs. Maples and Co., Frederick's-place, Old Jewry.

WALDUCK, HANNAH, late of 86, New Bond-street, but now of 8, Nelson-square, Blackfriars-road, chemist, May 5, June 9: solicitor, Mr. Bevan, 6, Old Jewry.

SCOTCH SEQUESTRATIONS.

BROWN, PETER, Ayr, clockmaker, May 1 and 29.

PATRICK, JAMES, Paisley, manufacturer, May 4 and 23.

DIVIDENDS.

Lees, Brassey, Farr, and Lee, Lombard-street, City, bankers, final div. of 7d.; 9, King's Arms-yard, Moorgate-street, April 30, and three following Thursdays—High Panton and Son, Sunderland, iron manufacturers, first div. of 6d.; 57, Grey-street, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, any Saturday—Panton, Panton, Forster, and Morey, Sunderland, iron manufacturers, first div. of 4s. 4d.; 57, Grey-street, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, any Saturday—Richard Allinson, Whitehaven, Cumberland, ironmonger, fourth div. of 8d., also a div. of 8s. 4d. to those who have proved since the third dividend; 111, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, any Saturday—S. South, Spittlegate, Lincolnshire, maltster, first div. of 11d.; 7, Waterloo-st., Birmingham, any Friday—W. Dadds, Leadenhall-street, tea dealer, second div. of 6d.; 13, Old Jewry, City, April 29, and two following Wednesdays—John Yates, island of Guernsey, and of 22, York-road, Lambeth, ship owner, first div. of 2s. 6d.; 13, Old Jewry, City, April 29, and two following Wednesdays—William Hay and John Alfred Titterton, 103, London-road, oilmen, div. of 10d.; 1, Sambrook-court, Basinghall-street, any Friday—Michael Wrake, jun., Canterbury, bricklayer, first div. of 1s. 1d.; 2, Basinghall-street, any Wednesday.

BRITISH FUNDS.

Wed. Thur. Fri. Sat. Mon. Tues.

	96	96½	96	96½	96	96
3 percent. Consols ..	96	96½	96	96½	96	96
Ditto for Account ..	96	96½	96	96½	96	96
3 per cent Reduced ..	94½	95	95½	95	95	94½
New 3d Reduced ..	96	97	96½	97	97	97½
Long Annuities ..	10½	10½	10½	10½	10½	10½
Bank Stock ..	205½	205½	205½	205	205	205
India Stock ..	—	—	260	—	260	—
Exchequer Bills ..	23pm	24pm	26	25pm	26pm	26pm
India Bonds ..	—	—	31	—	—	—

FOREIGN FUNDS.

Belgian ..	98	Mexican ..	31½

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The true friends of Bible circulation should also consider how the immense reduction in price was effected, and how alone it can be continued. The words of the Rev. A. Brandom, one of the Secretaries of the British and Foreign Bible Society, to the undersigned, may be quoted as decisive on this point: "There is one satisfaction which you cannot fail to enjoy. All must admit that you have been mainly instrumental in producing that lowering of the price of the Bible, which is so intimately connected with the present extraordinary demand for the Sacred Volume."

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London: LONGMAN, BROWN, and Co.; and J. Nisbet and Co. Ipswich: F. Pawsey.

GATHERCOLE v. MIALL.

THE COMMITTEE, entirely approving of the course taken by Mr. Miall to obtain the judgment of the Court of Exchequer on the extraordinary doctrine laid down by Baron Parke in the trial at Cambridge, regret that that judgment has not been given so as to withdraw, or materially to modify, the Baron's doctrine. The Committee, therefore, have now nothing left to them but to protect the Editor of the *Nonconformist* from the loss incurred in this suit; and as the expense is not likely to be less than £750, and a judgment may compel immediate payment, the Committee urge upon their friends a remittance, on or before May 7th, of such aid as they may be ready to afford towards meeting these expenses.

APSLY PELLATT, Treasurer.

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ERRATA.—For James Smith, Esq., Gloucester, read Rev. James Smith, £5. For Mr. Stafford and J. Burton, Leicester, £5, read 5s. in each case. The names of Messrs. W. and G. Baines, of Leicester, were inserted twice in our former advertisements.

Further subscriptions will be received by the Treasurer, Falcon Glass Works, Blackfriars; at the Offices of the *Nonconformist* and *Patriot*; by Henry Bidgood, Esq., 7, Vigo-street, Regent-street; and by Robert Besley, Esq., Holloway.

GATHERCOLE v. MIALL.

AT A PUBLIC MEETING of the FRIENDS of RELIGIOUS FREEDOM, held at the British School-rooms, Kingsland, on WEDNESDAY Evening, April 22nd, T. S. DUNCOMBE, Esq., M.P., in the Chair, the following Resolutions were unanimously adopted:—

Moved by Rev. Clement Dukes, M.A.; seconded by Ebenezer Clarke, Esq.—

1. That in the opinion of this meeting the virtual establishment of a censorship of the press, claimed by Baron Parke, (on the trial to which reference has already been made), in favour of one class of public functionaries, to shield them from all and every animadversion of the press, and to remove from them the restraining influence of public opinion in the exercise of their official influence and power, would be as injurious to the State-church Establishment as it would be prejudicial to public morals, subversive of religious freedom, and repugnant to the pervading spirit of the British constitution.

Moved by Dr. Epps; seconded by Frederick Clark, Esq.—

2. That this meeting, declaring its indignant protest against the doctrine laid down by Baron Parke in his charge to the jury, and which doubtless constituted the basis of their verdict, calls upon the Dissenters of this country, and upon all friends of civil and religious freedom, to indemnify the Editor of the *Nonconformist*, by a public subscription, for verdict and costs; and this meeting earnestly hopes that such further steps will be taken as shall vindicate one of the most endeared rights of our country—the liberty of the press.

Moved by Rev. George Wilkins; seconded by Rev. John Cox.—

3. That this meeting deeply sympathises with Mr. Edward Miall, the uncompromising opponent of ecclesiastical tyranny, and record their high admiration of his noble and consistent advocacy of the rights of conscience and of man; and resolve that a subscription be now opened to aid in defraying the expenses of the late trial; and that these resolutions be inserted in the *Daily News*, the *Morning Advertiser*, the *Nonconformist*, and *Patriot* newspapers.

Moved by Rev. Dr. Hewlett; seconded by Washington Wilks, Editor of the *Reformer*—

4. That the cordial and hearty thanks of this meeting are due, and are hereby presented, to our worthy representative, T. S. Duncombe, Esq., for his kindness in taking the chair on this occasion; and this meeting desires to record its high satisfaction with the many, vigorous, and consistent manner in which he has discharged his Parliamentary duties, as one of the representatives of this important borough.

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The Directors give Notice—

1st. That the ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING of the PROPRIETORS will be held at Twelve o'clock precisely, on SATURDAY, the 16th day of MAY next, at the Offices of the Company, 62, King William-street, in the City of London.

2nd. That at such meeting, the Proprietors who then hold ten or more shares, which they have possessed six calendar months, may attend and vote.

3rd. That three Directors—Thomas Piper, Esq., Edward Wilson, Esq., and Edward Smith, Esq., and one Auditor, George Meek, Esq., retire—all of whom are re-eligible to their respective appointments, for which they will be accordingly proposed.

4th. That there will also be an election to supply the vacancy occasioned by the death of Peter Ellis, Esq., which vacancy was declared by the Board on the 24th of December last.

5th. That any Proprietors duly qualified, who shall be desirous of becoming candidates for any of these situations, must give written notice of their intention at the Offices to the Secretary, at least ten days previous to the time of such meeting.

By order of the Directors,

April 25, 1846.

THOMAS PRICE, Secretary.

At the close of the poll the number of votes was reported as follows, and the first FOUR were declared duly elected:—

Martin	955	Breese	205
Amos	800	Porter	187
Davies, S. B.	690	Smith	180
Parrett	633	Difsey	159
O'Neill	448	Allen	132
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